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CHICAGO ATLANTA NEW YORK

Anderson College and Theological Seminary

The Lake English Classics

REVISED EDITION WITH HELPS TO STUDY

Macaulay, Thomas Babington Macaulay
Baron, 1800-1859.

MACAULAY'S ESSAYS

ON

ADDISON AND JOHNSON,

EDITED FOR SCHOOL USE

BY

ALPHONSO G. NEWCOMER

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SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY

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PREFACE

Julius Cæsar and Lord Macaulay have been much abused writers. They did not mean to write immortal works, least of all did they mean to write immortal exercises for the school-room. But when a man writes—just as he would fight, on the field of battle or in the political arena—with what Quintilian describes as "force, point, and vehemence of style," he must expect the school-boy to devour his pages. This is right,—this is not abuse; the abuse is done when live literature is transformed into dead rhetoric, a thing for endless exercises in etymologies and constructions, until the very name of the author becomes odious. Perhaps it is late for this complaint; we flatter ourselves that we are coming to reason and balance in our methods. Certainly I should not try to discourage study, and liberal study, of the mechanics of composition. And there is no better medium for such study than Macaulay's Essays. But I trust that every teacher to whom the duty of conducting such study falls will not at the same time forget that literature is an art which touches life very closely, and has its springs far back in the human spirit.

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With the hope of encouraging this attitude I have ventured to assume the responsibility of setting afloat one more annotated text of Macaulay. Realizing that, in dealing with the work of a writer whose affiliations with literature are chiefly formal (Introduction, **19**), there is no escape from considerations of style, I have frankly put the matter foremost. But I have tried to take a broad view of its significance, and in particular I have tried to do Macaulay justice. Altogether too many pupils have carried away from the study of him the narrow idea that his great achievement consisted in using one or two very patent (but, if they only knew it, very petty) rhetorical devices. It has been the primary aim of my Introduction to set these matters in their right perspective. I have not outlined specific methods of study, which are to be found everywhere by those who value them, but both Introduction and Notes contain many suggestions. It seems better to stop at this. Even the few illustrations I have used have been preferably drawn from essays not here printed. No editor should wish to take from teacher or pupil the profit of investigation or the stimulus of discovery.

There is another matter in which I should like to counsel vigilance, and that is the habit of requiring pupils to trace allusions, quotations, etc. The practice has been much abused, and a warning seems especially necessary in the study of a writer

like Macaulay, who crowds his pages with instances and illustrations. It is profitable to follow him in the process of bringing together a dozen things to enforce his point, but it is not profitable to reverse the process and allow ourselves to be led away from the subject in hand into a multitude of unrelated matters. Such practices are ruinous to the intellect. We must concentrate attention, not dissipate it. Only when we fail to catch the full significance of an allusion, should we look it up. Then we must see to it that we bring back from our research just what occasioned the allusion, just what bears on the immediate passage. Other facts will be picked up by the way and may come useful in good time, but for the purpose of our present study we should insist on the vital relation of every fact contributed.

So earnest am I upon this point that I must illustrate. At one place Macaulay writes: "Do we believe that Erasmus and Fracastorius wrote Latin as well as Dr. Robertson and Sir Walter Scott wrote English? And are there not in the Dissertation on India, the last of Dr. Robertson's works, in Waverley, in Marmion, Scotticisms at which a London apprentice would laugh?" Why should we be told (to pick out one of these half-dozen allusions) that Dr. Robertson's first name was William, that he lived from 1721 to 1793, and that he wrote such and such books? With all respect for the memory of Dr Robertson, I submit

that this is not the place to learn about him and his histories. Macaulay's allusion to him is not explained in the least by giving his date. Yet there is something here to interpret, simple though it be. Let us put questions until we are sure that the pupil understands that Dr. Robertson, being a Scot, could not write wholly idiomatic English—English, say, of the London type—and that this is one illustration of the general truth that a man can write with purity only in his native tongue. It is such exercises in interpretation that I should like to see substituted for the disastrous game of hunting allusions.

I cannot flatter myself that I have achieved consistency in my own notes and glossary. To recur to the illustration above, I have omitted the name of Dr. Robertson, because Macaulay seems to tell us enough about him, while I have added a few words about Fracastorius in order that he may be to the reader something more than a name. But I cannot help suspecting that it is a waste of energy for any one to try to impress even this name on his mind, and I should be quite satisfied that a pupil of mine should never look it up, provided he had alertness enough to see that Fracastorius wrote in Latin though he was not a Roman, and discrimination enough to feel that there are other allusions of an entirely different character which must be looked up.

The glossary aims to include only names and

terms not familiar or easily found (provided they need explaining), and also names which, though easily found, call for some special comment. In general, when allusions are self-explaining, we should rest content with our text.

The text adopted is that of Lady Trevelyan's edition, with very slight changes in spelling, punctuation, and capitals. A. G. N.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, January, 1903.

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INTRODUCTION

When, in 1825, Francis Jeffrey, Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, searching for "some clever young man who would write for us," laid his hands upon Thomas Babington Macaulay, he did not know that he was marking a red-letter day in the calendar of English journalism. Through the two decades and more of its existence, the *Review* had gone on serving its patrons with the respectable dulness of Lord Brougham and the respectable vivacity of its editor, and the patrons had apparently dreamed of nothing better until the momentous August when the young Fellow of Trinity, not yet twenty-five, flashed upon its pages with his essay on Milton. And for the next two decades the essays that followed from the same pen became so far the mainstay of the magazine that booksellers declared it "sold, or did not sell, according as there were, or were not, articles by Mr. Macaulay." Yet Jeffrey was not without some inkling of the significance of the event, for upon receipt of the first manuscript he wrote to its author the words so often quoted: "The more I think, the less I can conceive where you picked

1. Macaulay's Advent in the Edinburgh Review.

up that style." Thus early was the finger of criticism pointed toward the one thing that has always been most conspicuously associated with Macaulay's name.

2. Effect on Prose.

English prose, at this date, was still clinging to the traditions of its measured eighteenth-century stateliness. But the life had nearly gone out of it, and the formalism which sat so elegantly upon Addison and not uneasily upon Johnson had stiffened into pedantry, scarcely relieved by the awkward attempts of the younger journalists to give it spirit and freedom. It was this languishing prose which Macaulay, perhaps more than any other one writer, deserves the credit of rejuvenating with that wonderful something which Jeffrey was pleased to call "style." Macaulay himself would certainly have deprecated the association of his fame with a mere synonym for rhetoric, and we should be wronging him if we did not hasten to add that style, rightly understood, is a very large and significant thing, comprehending, indeed, a man's whole intellectual and emotional attitude toward those phases of life with which he comes into contact. It is the man's manner of reacting upon the world, his manner of expressing himself to the world; and the world has little beyond the manner of a man's expression by which to judge of the man himself. But a good style, even in its narrow sense of a good command of language, of a

masterly and individual manner of presenting thought, is yet no mean accomplishment, and if Macaulay had done nothing else than revivify English prose, which is, just possibly, his most enduring achievement, he would have little reason to complain. What he accomplished in this direction and how, it is our chief purpose here to explain. In the meantime we shall do well to glance at his other achievements and take some note of his equipment.

3. The Man.

Praed has left this description of him: "There came up a short, manly figure, marvelously upright, with a bad neckcloth, and one hand in his waistcoat-pocket." We read here, easily enough, brusqueness, precision without fastidiousness, and self-confidence. These are all prominent traits of the man, and they all show in his work. Add kindness and moral rectitude, which scarcely show there, and humor, which shows only in a somewhat unpleasant light, and you have a fair portrait. Now these are manifestly the attributes of a man who knows what worldly comfort and physical well-being are, a man of good digestive and assimilative powers, well-fed, incapable of worry, born to succeed.

In truth, Macaulay was a man of remarkable vitality and energy, and though he died too early —at the beginning of his sixtieth year—he began his work young and continued it with almost unabated vigor to the end. But his "work" (as

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we are in the habit of naming that which a man leaves behind him), voluminous as it is, represents only one side of his activity. There was the early-assumed burden of repairing his father's broken fortunes, and providing for the family of younger brothers and sisters. The burden, it is true, was assumed with characteristic cheerfulness —it could not destroy for him the worldly comfort we have spoken of—but it entailed heavy responsibilities for a young man. It forced him to seek salaried positions, such as the post of commissioner of bankruptcy, when he might have been more congenially employed. Then there were the many years spent in the service of the government as a Whig member of the House of Commons and as Cabinet Minister during the exciting period of the Reform Bill and the Anti-Corn-Law League, with all that such service involved—study of politics, canvassing, countless dinners, public and private, speech-making in Parliament and out, reading and making reports, endless committee meetings, endless sessions. There were the three years and a half spent in India, drafting a penal code. And there was, first and last, the acquisition of the knowledge that made possible this varied activity, —the years at the University, the study of law and jurisprudence, the reading, not of books, but of entire national literatures, the ransacking of libraries and the laborious deciphering of hundreds of manuscripts in the course of historical

research. Perhaps we fall into Macaulay's trick of exaggeration, but it is not easy to exaggerate the mental feats of a man who could carry in his memory works like *Paradise Lost* and *Pilgrim's Progress* and who was able to put it on record that in thirteen months he had read thirty classical authors, most of them entire and many of them twice, and among them such voluminous writers as Euripides, Herodotus, Plato, Plutarch, Livy, and Cicero. Nor was the classical literature a special field; Italian, Spanish, French, and the wildernesses of the English drama and the English novel (not excluding the "trashy") were all explored. We may well be astounded that the man who could do all these things in a lifetime of moderate compass, and who was besides such a tireless pedestrian that he was "forever on his feet indoors as well as out," could find time to produce so much literature of his own.

4. His Work.

That literature—so to style the body of work which has survived him—divides itself into at least five divisions. There are, first, the Essays, which he produced at intervals all through life. There are the Speeches which were delivered on the floor of Parliament between his first election in 1830 and his last in 1852, and which rank very high in that grade of oratory which is just below the highest. There is the Indian Penal Code, not altogether his own work and not literature of course, yet praised

by Justice Stephen as one of the most remarkable and satisfactory instruments of its kind ever drafted. There are the Poems, published in 1842, adding little to his fame and not a great deal to English literature, yet very respectable achievements in the field of the modern romantic ballad. Finally, there is the unfinished History of England from the Accession of James the Second, his last, his most ambitious, and probably, all things considered, his most successful work.

5. History of England.

The History and Essays comprise virtually all of this product that the present generation cares to read. Upon the History, indeed, Macaulay staked his claim to future remembrance, regarding it as the great work of his life. He was exceptionally well equipped for the undertaking. He had such a grasp of universal history as few men have been able to secure, and a detailed knowledge of the period of English history under contemplation equalled by none. But he delayed the undertaking too long, and he allowed his time and energy to be dissipated in obedience to party calls. Death overtook him in the midst of his labors. Even thus, it is clear that he underestimated the magnitude of the task he had set himself. For he proposed to cover a period of nearly a century and a half; the four volumes and a fraction which he completed actually cover about fifteen years. His plan involved too much detail. It has been called pictorial history

writing, and such it was. History was to be as vital and as human as romance. It was to be in every sense a restoration of the life of the past. Macaulay surely succeeded in this aim, as his fascinating third chapter will always testify; whether the aim were a laudable one, we cannot stop here to discuss. Historians will continue to point out the defects of the work, its diffuseness, its unphilosophical character, perhaps its partisan spirit. But it remains a magnificent fragment, and it will be read by thousands who could never be persuaded to look into dryer though possibly sounder works. Indeed, there is no higher tribute to its greatness than the objection that has sometimes been brought against it, namely, that it treats a comparatively unimportant era of England's history with such fulness and brilliance, and has attracted to it so many readers, that the other eras are thrown sadly out of perspective.

6. Essays.

But Macaulay's name is popularly associated with that body of Essays which in bulk alone (always excepting Sainte-Beuve's) are scarcely exceeded by the product of any other essay-writer in an essay-writing age. And the popular judgment which has insisted upon holding to this supposedly ephemeral work is not far wrong. With all their faults upon them, until we have something better in kind to replace them, we cannot consent to let them go. In one sense, their range is not

wide, for they fall naturally into but two divisions, the historical and the critical. To these Mr. Morison would add a third, the controversial, comprising the four essays on Mill, Sadler, Southey, and Gladstone; but these are comparatively unimportant. In another sense, however, their range is very wide. For each one gathers about a central subject a mass of details that in the hands of any other writer would be bewildering, while the total knowledge that supports the bare arrays of fact and perpetual press of allusions betrays a scope that, to the ordinary mind, is quite beyond comprehension.

And the more remarkable must this work appear when we consider the manner of its production. Most of the essays were published anonymously in the *Edinburgh Review*, a few early ones in Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*, five (those on Atterbury, Bunyan, Goldsmith, Johnson, and Pitt), written late in life, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The writing of them was always an avocation with Macaulay, never a vocation. Those produced during his parliamentary life were usually written in the hours between early rising and breakfast. Some were composed at a distance from his books. He scarcely dreamed of their living beyond the quarter of their publication, certainly not beyond the generation for whose entertainment they were written with all the devices to catch applause and all the disregard of permanent

merit which writing for such a purpose invites. He could scarcely be induced, even after they were pirated and republished in America, to reissue them in a collected edition, with his revision and under his name. These facts should be remembered in mitigation of the severe criticism to which they are sometimes subjected.

Between the historical and the critical essays we are not called upon to decide, though the decision is by no means difficult. Macaulay was essentially a historian, a story-teller, and the historical essay, or short monograph on the events of a single period that usually group themselves about some great statesman or soldier, he made peculiarly his own. He did not invent it, as Mr. Morison points out, but he expanded and improved it until he "left it complete and a thing of power." Fully a score of his essays—more than half the total number—are of this description, the most and the best of them dealing with English history. Chief among them are the essays on Hallam, Temple, the Pitts, Clive, and Warren Hastings. The critical essays—upon Johnson, Addison, Bunyan, and other men of letters—are in every way as admirable reading as the historical. They must take a lower rank only because Macaulay lacked some of the prime requisites of a successful critic—broad and deep sympathies, refined tastes, and nice perception of the more delicate tints and shadings that count for almost everything in a work of high art. His

critical judgments are likely to be blunt, positive, and superficial. But they are never actually shallow and rarely without a modicum of truth. And they are never uninteresting. For, true to his narrative instinct, he always interweaves biography. And besides, the essays have the same rhetorical qualities that mark with distinction all the prose he has written, that is to say, the same masterly method and the same compelling style. It is to this method and style, that, after our rapid review of Macaulay's aims and accomplishments, we are now ready to turn.

7. Organizing Faculty.

There were two faculties of Macaulay's mind that set his work far apart from other work in the same field—the faculties of organization and illustration. He saw things in their right relation and he knew how to make others see them thus. If he was describing, he never thrust minor details into the foreground. If he was narrating, he never "got ahead of his story." The importance of this is not sufficiently recognized. Many writers do not know what organization means. They do not know that in all great and successful literary work it is nine-tenths of the labor. Yet consider a moment. History is a very complex thing: divers events may be simultaneous in their occurrence; or one crisis may be slowly evolving from many causes in many places. It is no light task to tell these things one after another and yet leave a unified impression, to

take up a dozen new threads in succession without tangling them and without losing the old ones, and to lay them all down at the right moment and without confusion. Such is the narrator's task, and it was at this task that Macaulay proved himself a past master. He could dispose of a number of trivial events in a single sentence. Thus, for example, runs his account of the dramatist Wycherley's naval career: "He embarked, was present at a battle, and celebrated it, on his return, in a copy of verses too bad for the bellman." On the other hand, when it is a question of a great crisis, like the impeachment of Warren Hastings, he knew how to prepare for it with elaborate ceremony and to portray it in a scene of the highest dramatic power.

This faculty of organization shows itself in what we technically name structure; and logical and rhetorical structure may be studied at their very best in his work. His essays are perfect units, made up of many parts, systems within systems, that play together without clog or friction. You can take them apart like a watch and put them together again. But try to rearrange the parts and the mechanism is spoiled. Each essay has its subdivisions, which in turn are groups of paragraphs. And each paragraph is a unit. Take the first paragraph of the essay on Milton: the word *manuscript* appears in the first sentence, and it reappears in the last; clearly the paragraph deals

with a single very definite topic. And so with all. Of course the unity manifests itself in a hundred ways, but it is rarely wanting. Most frequently it takes the form of an expansion of a topic given in the first sentence, or a preparation for a topic to be announced only in the last. These initial and final sentences—often in themselves both aphoristic and memorable—serve to mark with the utmost clearness the different stages in the progress of the essay.

Illustration is of more incidental service, but as used by Macaulay becomes highly organic. For his illustrations are not far-fetched or laboriously worked out. They seem to be of one piece with his story or his argument. His mind was quick to detect resemblances and analogies. He was ready with a comparison for everything, sometimes with half a dozen. For example, Addison's essays, he has occasion to say, were different every day of the week, and yet, to his mind, each day like something—like Horace, like Lucian, like the "Tales of Scheherezade." He draws long comparisons between Walpole and Townshend, between Congreve and Wycherley, between Essex and Villiers, between the fall of the Carlovingians and the fall of the Moguls. He follows up a general statement with swarms of instances. Have historians been given to exaggerating the villainy of Machiavelli? Macaulay can name you half a dozen who did so.

8. Illustrating Faculty.

Did the writers of Charles's faction delight in making their opponents appear contemptible? "They have told us that Pym broke down in a speech, that Ireton had his nose pulled by Hollis, that the Earl of Northumberland cudgelled Henry Marten, that St. John's manners were sullen, that Vane had an ugly face, that Cromwell had a red nose." Do men fail when they quit their own province for another? Newton failed thus; Bentley failed; Inigo Jones failed; Wilkie failed. In the same way he was ready with quotations. He writes in one of his letters: "It is a dangerous thing for a man with a very strong memory to read very much. I could give you three or four quotations this moment in support of that proposition; but I will bring the vicious propensity under subjection, if I can." Thus we see his mind doing instantly and involuntarily what other minds do with infinite pains, bringing together all things that have a likeness or a common bearing.

Both of these faculties, for organization and for illustration, are to be partially explained by his marvelous memory. As we have seen, he read everything, and he seems to have been incapable of forgetting anything. The immense advantage which this gave him over other men is obvious. He who carries his library in his mind wastes no time in turning up references. And surveying the whole field of his knowledge at once, with outlines and details

9. Memory.

all in immediate range, he should be able to see things in their natural perspective. Of course it does not follow that a great memory will always enable a man to systematize and synthesize, but it should make it easier for its possessor than for other men, while the power of ready illustration which it affords him is beyond question.

10. Clearness and Simplicity.

It is precisely these talents that set Macaulay among the simplest and clearest of writers, and that account for much of his popularity. People found that in taking up one of his articles they simply read on and on, never puzzling over the meaning of a sentence, getting the exact force of every statement, and following the trend of thought with scarcely a mental effort. And his natural gift of making things plain he took pains to support by various devices. He constructed his sentences after the simplest normal fashion, subject and verb and object, sometimes inverting for emphasis, but rarely complicating, and always reducing expression to the barest terms. He could write, for example, "One advantage the chaplain had," but it is impossible to conceive of his writing, "Now amid all the discomforts and disadvantages with which the unfortunate chaplain was surrounded, there was one thing which served to offset them, and which, if he chose to take the opportunity of enjoying it, might well be regarded as a positive advantage." One will search his pages in

vain for loose, trailing clauses and involved constructions. His vocabulary was of the same simple nature. He had a complete command of ordinary English and contented himself with that. He rarely ventured beyond the most abridged dictionary. An occasional technical term might be required, but he was shy of the unfamiliar. He would coin no words and he would use no archaisms. Foreign words, when fairly naturalized, he employed sparingly. "We shall have no disputes about diction," he wrote to Napier, Jeffrey's successor; "the English language is not so poor but that I may very well find in it the means of contenting both you and myself."

Now all of these things are wholly admirable, and if they constituted the sum total of Macaulay's method, as they certainly do constitute the chief features of it, we should pass our word of praise and have done. But he did not stop here, and often, unfortunately too often, these things are not thought of at all by those who profess to speak knowingly of his wonderful "style." For in addition to clearness he sought also force, an entirely legitimate object in itself and one in which he was merely giving way to his oratorical or journalistic instinct. Only, his fondness for effect led him too far and into various mannerisms, some of which it is quite impossible to approve. There is no question that they are powerfully effective, as they were meant to be.

11. Force.

often rightly so, and they are exceedingly interesting to study, but for these very reasons the student needs to be warned against attaching to them an undue importance.

12. Concreteness.

Perhaps no one will quarrel with his liking for the specific and the concrete. This indeed is not mannerism. It is the natural working of the imaginative mind, of the picturing faculty, and is of the utmost value in forceful, vivid writing. The "ruffs and peaked beards of Theobald's" make an excellent passing allusion to the social life of the time of Queen Elizabeth and James the First. The manœuvres of an army become intensely interesting when we see it "pouring through those wild passes which, worn by mountain torrents and dark with jungle, lead down from the table-land of Mysore to the plains of the Carnatic." A reference to the reputed learning of the English ladies of the sixteenth century is most cunningly put in the picture of "those fair pupils of Ascham and Aylmer who compared, over their embroidery, the styles of Isocrates and Lysias, and who, while the horns were sounding, and the dogs in full cry, sat in the lonely oriel, with eyes riveted to that immortal page which tells how meekly the first great martyr of intellectual liberty took the cup from his weeping gaoler." But when his eagerness for the concretely picturesque leads him to draw a wholly imaginary picture of how it may have come about

that Addison had Steele arrested for debt, we are quite ready to protest.

13. Exaggeration.

His tendency to exaggerate, moreover, and his love of paradox, belong in a very different category. Let the reader count the strong words, superlatives, universal propositions, and the like, employed in a characteristic passage, and he will understand at once what is meant. In the essay on Frederic the Great we read: "No sovereign has ever taken possession of a throne by a clearer title. All the politics of the Austrian cabinet had, during twenty years, been directed to one single end—the settlement of the succession. From every person whose rights could be considered as injuriously affected, renunciations in the most solemn form had been obtained." And not content with the ordinary resources of language, he has a trick of raising superlatives themselves, as it were, to the second or third power. "There can be little doubt that this great empire was, even in its best days, far worse governed than the worst governed parts of Europe now are." "What the Italian is to the Englishman, what the Hindoo is to the Italian, what the Bengalee is to other Hindoos, that was Nuncomar to other Bengalees." It is evident that this habit is a positive vice. He tried to excuse it on the ground that there is some inevitable loss in the communication of a fact from one mind to another, and that over-statement is necessary to

correct the error. But the argument is fallacious. Macaulay did not have a monopoly of the imaginative faculty: other men are as much given to exaggeration as he, and stories, as they pass from mouth to mouth, invariably "grow."

14. Antithesis and Balance.

His constant resort to antithesis to point his statements is another vice. "That government," he writes of the English rule in India, "oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilization." Again: "The Puritan had affected formality; the comic poet laughed at decorum. The Puritan had frowned at innocent diversions; the comic poet took under his patronage the most flagitious excesses. The Puritan had canted; the comic poet blasphemed." And so on, through a paragraph. Somewhat similar to this is his practice of presenting the contrary of a statement before presenting the statement itself, of telling us, for example, what might have been expected to happen before telling us what actually did happen. It is to be noticed that, accompanying this use of antithesis and giving it added force, there is usually a balance of form, that is, a more or less exact correspondence of sentence structure. Given one of Macaulay's sentences presenting the first part of an antithesis, it is sometimes possible to foretell, word for word, what the next sentence will be. Such mechanical writing is certainly not

to be commended as a model of style. Of course it is the abuse of these things and not the mere use of them that constitutes Macaulay's vice.

15. Minor Devices.

There are still other formal devices which he uses so freely that we are justified in calling them mannerisms. One of the most conspicuous is the short sentence, the blunt, unqualified statement of one thing at a time. No one who knows Macaulay would hesitate over the authorship of the following: "The shore was rocky: the night was black: the wind was furious: the waves of the Bay of Biscay ran high." The only wonder is that he did not punctuate it with four periods. He would apparently much rather repeat his subject and make a new sentence than connect his verbs. Instead of writing, "He coaxed and wheedled," he is constantly tempted to write, "He coaxed, he wheedled," even though the practice involves prolonged reiteration of one form. The omission of connectives—rhetorical "asyndeton"—becomes itself a vice. The *ands*, *thens*, *therefores*, *howevers*, the reader must supply for himself. This demands alertness and helps to sustain interest; and while it may occasion a momentary perplexity, it will rarely do so when the reader comes to know the style and to read it with the right swing. But it all goes to enforce what Mr. John Morley calls the "unlovely staccato" of the style. It strikes harsh on the ear and on the brain, and from a piquant stimulant becomes an

intolerable weariness. Separate things get emphasis, but the nice gradations and relations are sacrificed.

16. Dogmatism.

After all, though we stigmatize these things as "devices," intimating that they were mechanical and arbitrary, we must regard them as partly temperamental. Macaulay's mind was not subtle in its working and was not given to making nice distinctions. He cared chiefly for bold outlines and broad effects. Truth, to his mind, was sharply defined from falsehood, right from wrong, good from evil. Everything could be divided from everything else, labeled, and pigeon-holed. And he was very certain, in the fields which he chose to enter, that he knew where to draw the dividing lines. Positiveness, self-confidence, are written all over his work. Set for a moment against his method the method of Matthew Arnold. This is how Arnold tries to point out a defect in modern English society: "And, owing to the same causes, does not a subtle criticism lead us to make, even on the good looks and politeness of our aristocratic class, and even of the most fascinating half of that class, the feminine half, the one qualifying remark, that in these charming gifts there should perhaps be, for ideal perfection, a shade more *soul?*" Note the careful approach, the constant, anxious qualification, working up to a climax in the almost painful hesitation of "a shade—more—*soul.*"

Imagine, if you can, Macaulay, the rough rider, he of the "stamping emphasis," winding into a truth like that. But indeed it is quite impossible to imagine Macaulay's having any truth at all to enunciate about so ethereal an attribute as this same *soul*.

We have come well into the region of Macaulay's defects. Clearness, we have seen, he had in a remarkable degree. Force he also had in a remarkable degree, though he frequently abused the means of displaying it. But genuine beauty, it is scarcely too much to say, he had not at all. Of course, much depends upon our definitions. We do not mean to deny to his writings all elements of charm. The very ease of his mastery over so many resources of composition gives pleasure to the reader. His frequent picturesqueness we have granted. He can be genuinely figurative, though his figures often incline to showiness. And above all he has a certain sense for rhythm. He can write long, sweeping sentences—periods that rise and descend with the feeling, and that come to a stately or graceful close. The sentence cited above about the learning of women in the sixteenth century may be taken as an example. Or read the sketch of the Catholic Church in the third paragraph of the essay on Von Ranke's History of the Popes, or the conclusion of the essay on Lord Holland, or better still the conclusion of the somewhat juvenile

17. Ornament, Rhythm.

essay on Mitford's Greece, with its glowing tribute to Athens and its famous picture of the "single naked fisherman washing his nets in the river of the ten thousand masts." But at best it is the rhythm of mere declamation, swinging and pompous. There is no fine flowing movement, nothing like the entrancing glides of a waltz or the airy steps of a minuet, but only a steady march to the interminable and monotonous beat of the drum. For real music, sweetness, subtle and involved harmony, lingering cadences, we turn to any one of a score of prose writers—Sir Thomas Browne, Addison, Burke, Lamb, De Quincey, Hawthorne, Ruskin, Pater, Stevenson—before we turn to Macaulay. Nor is there any other mere grace of composition in which he can be said to excel.

18. Temperamental Defects.

There is no blame in the matter. We are only trying to note dispassionately the defects as well as the excellences of a man who was not a universal genius. It would be easy to point out much greater defects than any yet mentioned, defects that go deeper than style. One or two indeed we are obliged to mention. There is the strain of coarseness often to be noted in his writing, showing itself now in an abusive epithet, now in a vulgar catch-word, now in a sally of humor bordering on the ribald. It is never grossly offensive, but it is none the less wounding to a delicate sensibility. Then there is the Philistine attitude, which Mr. Arnold spent so

much of his life in combating, the attitude of the complacent, self-satisfied Englishman, who sees in the British constitution and the organization of the British empire the best of all possible governments, and in the material and commercial progress of the age the best of all possible civilizations. And there is the persistent refusal to treat questions of really great moral significance upon any kind of moral basis. The absolute right or wrong of an act Macaulay will avoid discussing if he possibly can, and take refuge in questions of policy, of sheer profit and loss. We shall not blame him severely for even these serious shortcomings. On the first point we remember that he was deliberately playing to his audience, consciously writing down to the level of his public. On the second we realize that he was a practical politician and that he never could have been such with the idealism of a Carlyle or a Ruskin. And on the third we remember that his own private life was one of affectionate sacrifice and his public life absolutely stainless. He could vote away his own income when moral conviction demanded it. Besides, even when he was only arguing, "policy" was always on the side of the right. What blame is left? Only this—that he should have pandered to any public, compromising his future fame for an ephemeral applause, and that he should have so far wronged the mass of his readers as to suppose that arguments based upon policy would be more

acceptable to them than arguments based upon sound moral principles. That he was something of a Philistine and not wholly a "child of light," may be placed to his discount but not to his discredit. The total indictment is small and is mentioned here only in the interests of impartial criticism.

19. Literary Significance.

It remains only to sum up the literary significance of Macaulay's work. Nearly all of that work, we must remember, lies outside of the field of what we know as "pure literature." Pure literature—poetry, drama, fiction—is a pure artistic or imaginative product with entertainment as its chief aim. Though it may instruct incidentally, it does not merely inform. It is the work of creative genius. Macaulay's essays were meant to inform. Characters and situations are delineated in them, but not created. History and criticism are often not literature at all. They become literature only by revealing an imaginative insight and clothing themselves in artistic form. Macaulay's essays have done this; they engage the emotions as well as the intellect. They were meant for records, for storehouses of information; but they are also works of art, and therefore they live intact while the records of equally industrious but less gifted historians are revised and replaced. Thus by their artistic quality, *style* in a word, they are removed from the shelves of history to the shelves of literature.

It becomes plain, perhaps, why at the outset we spoke of style. One hears little about Shakspere's style, or Scott's, or Shelley's. Where there are matters of larger interest—character, dramatic situations, passion, lofty conceptions, abstract truth—there is little room for attention to so superficial a quality, or rather to a quality that has some such superficial aspects. But in the work of less creative writers, a purely literary interest, if it be aroused at all, must centre chiefly in this. And herein lies Macaulay's significance to the literary world to-day.

20. Influence on Journalism.

Upon the professional writers of that world, as distinct from the readers, his influence has been no less than profound, partly for evil, but chiefly, we think (Mr. Morley notwithstanding), for good. His name was mentioned at the beginning of our sketch in connection with journalism. It is just because the literary development of our age has moved so rapidly along this line, that Macaulay's influence has been so far-reaching. The journalist must have an active pen. He cannot indulge in meditation while the ink dries. He cannot stop to arrange and rearrange his ideas, to study the cadence of his sentences, to seek for the unique or the suggestive word. What Macaulay did was to furnish the model of just such a style as would meet this need—ready, easy, rapid, yet ne er loose or obscure. He seems to have found his way by

instinct to all those expedients which make writing easy—short, direct sentences, commonplace words, constant repetition and balance of form, adapted quotations, and stock phrases from the Bible or Prayer-Book or from the language of the professions, politics, and trade. This style he impressed upon a generation of journalists that was ready to receive it and keenly alive to its value.

The word *journalist* is scarcely broad enough to cover the class of writers here meant. For the class includes, in addition to the great "press tribe" from editor to reporter and reviewer, every writer of popular literature, every one who appeals to a miscellaneous public, who undertakes to make himself a medium between special intelligence and general intelligence. And there are thousands of these writers to-day—in editorial chairs, on magazine staffs, on political, educational, and scientific commissions—who are consciously or unconsciously employing the convenient instrument which Macaulay did so much toward perfecting seventy-five years ago. The evidence is on every hand. One listens to a lecture by a scientist who, it is quite possible, never read a paragraph of Macaulay, and catches, before long, words like these: "There is no reversal of nature's processes. The world has come from a condition of things essentially different from the present. It is moving toward a condition of things essentially different from the present." Or one

turns to an editorial in a daily paper and reads "It will be ever thus with all the movements in this country to which a revolutionary interpretation can be attached. The mass and body of the people of the United States are a level-headed, sober-minded people. They are an upright and a solvent people. They love their government. They are proud of their government. Its credit is dear to them. Enlisted in its cause, party lines sag loose upon the voters or disappear altogether from their contemplation." The ear-marks are very plain to see.

We would not make the mistake of attributing too many and too large effects to a single cause. Life and art are very complex matters and the agencies at work are quite beyond our calculation. There is always danger of exaggerating the importance of a single influence. The trend of things is not easily disturbed—the history of the world never yet turned upon the cast of a die or the length of a woman's nose. In spite of Jeffrey's testimony—and it cannot be lightly brushed aside—we are not ready to give Macaulay the whole credit for inventing this style. Nor do we believe that journalism would be materially different from what it is to-day, even though Macaulay had never written a line. But it does not seem too much to admit that the first vigorous impulse came from him and that the manner is deservedly associated with his name.

In itself, as has been pointed out, it is not a

beautiful thing. It is a thing of mannerisms, and these we have not hesitated to call vices. From the point of view of literature they are vices, blemishes on the face of true art. But the style is useful none the less. The ready writer is not concerned about beauty, he does not profess to be an artist. He has intelligence to convey, and the simplest and clearest medium is for his purpose the best. He will continue to use this serviceable medium nor trouble himself about its "unlovely staccato" and its gaudy tinsel. Meanwhile the literary artist may pursue his way in search of a more elusive music and a more iridescent beauty, satisfied with the tithe of Macaulay's popularity if only he can attain to some measure of his own ideals.

21. Real Greatness.

But Macaulay himself should be remembered for his real greatness. The facile imitator of the tricks of his pen should beware of the ingratitude of assuming that these were the measure of his mind. These vices are virtues in their place, but they are not high virtues, and they are not the virtues that made Macaulay great. His greatness lay in the qualities that we have tried to insist upon from the first, qualities that are quite beyond imitation, the power of bringing instantly into one mental focus the accumulations of a prodigious memory, and the range of vision, the grasp of detail, and the insight into men, measures, and events, that enabled him to reduce to beautiful order the chaos of human history.

CHRONOLOGY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

1800. Macaulay born, Oct. 25, at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire.
1818. Entered Trinity College, Cambridge. (B. A., 1822; M. A., 1825.)
1823. Began contributing to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine.*
1824. Elected Fellow of Trinity.
1825. Began contributing to *Edinburgh Review.*
1826. Called to the Bar.
1830. Entered Parliament.
1831. Speeches on Reform Bill.
1834. Went to India as member of the Supreme Council.
1837. Indian Penal Code.
1838. Returned to England. Tour in Italy.
1839. Elected to Parliament for Edinburgh. Secretary at War.
1842. Lays of Ancient Rome.
1843. Collected edition of Essays.
1848. History of England, vols. i. and ii. (Vols. iii. and iv. 1855; vol. v. 1861.)
1852. Failure in health.
1857. Made Baron Macaulay of Rothley.
1859. Died Dec. 28. (Interred in Westminster Abbey.)

The standard edition of Macaulay's works is that edited by his sister, Lady Trevelyan, in eight volumes, and published at London, 1866; reprinted at New York, by Harper Bros. The authorized biography is that by his nephew, G. O. Trevelyan, a book which is exceedingly interesting and which takes high rank among English

biographies. J. Cotter Morison's life in the English Men of Letters series is briefer, is both biographical and critical, and is in every way an admirable work. There are also the articles in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, by Mark Pattison, and in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, by Mr. Leslie Stephen. The best critical essays are those by Mr. Leslie Stephen in *Hours in a Library*, by Mr. John Morley in *Miscellanies*, and by Walter Bagehot in *Literary Studies*.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADDISON

The Life of Joseph Addison. By LUCY AIKIN. 2 vols., 8vo. London: 1843.

Some reviewers are of opinion that a lady who dares to publish a book renounces by that act the franchises appertaining to her sex, and can claim no exemption from the utmost rigor of critical procedure. From that opinion we dissent. We admit, indeed, that in a country which boasts of many female writers, eminently qualified by their talents and acquirements to influence the public mind, it would be of most pernicious consequence that inaccurate history or unsound philosophy should be suffered to pass uncensured, merely because the offender chanced to be a lady. But we conceive that, on such occasions, a critic would do well to imitate the courteous knight who found himself compelled by duty to keep the lists against Bradamante. He, we are told, defended successfully the cause of which he was the champion; but before the fight began, exchanged Balisarda for a

less deadly sword, of which he carefully blunted the point and edge.

Nor are the immunities of sex the only immunities which Miss Aikin may rightfully plead. Several of her works, and especially the very pleasing Memoirs of the Reign of James the First, have fully entitled her to the privileges enjoyed by good writers. One of those privileges we hold to be this, that such writers, when, either from the unlucky choice of a subject, or from the indolence too often produced by success, they happen to fail, shall not be subjected to the severe discipline which it is sometimes necessary to inflict upon dunces and impostors, but shall merely be reminded by a gentle touch, like that with which the Laputan flapper roused his dreaming lord, that it is high time to wake.

Our readers will probably infer from what we have said that Miss Aikin's book has disappointed us. The truth is, that she is not well acquainted with her subject. No person who is not familiar with the political and literary history of England during the reigns of William the Third, of Anne, and of George the First, can possibly write a good life of Addison. Now, we mean no reproach to Miss Aikin, and many will think that we pay her a compliment, when we say that her studies have taken a different direction. She is better acquainted with Shakespeare and Raleigh, than with Congreve and Prior; and is far more at home among

the ruffs and peaked beards of Theobald's than among the Steenkirks and flowing periwigs which surrounded Queen Anne's tea-table at Hampton. She seems to have written about the Elizabethan age, because she had read much about it; she seems, on the other hand, to have read a little about the age of Addison, because she had determined to write about it. The consequence is that she has had to describe men and things without having either a correct or a vivid idea of them, and that she has often fallen into errors of a very serious kind. The reputation which Miss Aikin has justly earned stands so high, and the charm of Addison's letters is so great, that a second edition of this work may probably be required. If so, we hope that every paragraph will be revised, and that every date and fact about which there can be the smallest doubt will be carefully verified.

To Addison himself we are bound by a sentiment as much like affection as any sentiment can be, which is inspired by one who has been sleeping a hundred and twenty years in Westminster Abbey. We trust, however, that this feeling will not betray us into that abject idolatry which we have often had occasion to reprehend in others, and which seldom fails to make both the idolater and the idol ridiculous. A man of genius and virtue is but a man. All his powers cannot be equally developed; nor can we expect from him perfect self-knowledge. We need not, therefore, hesitate to admit

that Addison has left us some compositions which do not rise above mediocrity, some heroic poems hardly equal to Parnell's, some criticism as superficial as Dr. Blair's, and a tragedy not very much better than Dr. Johnson's. It is praise enough to say of a writer that, in a high department of literature, in which many eminent writers have distinguished themselves, he has had no equal; and this may with strict justice be said of Addison.

As a man, he may not have deserved the adoration which he received from those who, bewitched by his fascinating society, and indebted for all the comforts of life to his generous and delicate friendship, worshipped him nightly in his favorite temple at Button's. But, after full inquiry and impartial reflection, we have long been convinced that he deserved as much love and esteem as can be justly claimed by any of our infirm and erring race. Some blemishes may undoubtedly be detected in his character; but the more carefully it is examined, the more it will appear, to use the phrase of the old anatomists, sound in the noble parts, free from all taint of perfidy, of cowardice, of cruelty, of ingratitude, of envy. Men may easily be named in whom some particular good disposition has been more conspicuous than in Addison. But the just harmony of qualities, the exact temper between the stern and the humane virtues, the habitual observance of every law, not only of moral rectitude, but of moral grace and dignity, distinguish him

from all men who have been tried by equally strong temptations, and about whose conduct we possess equally full information.

His father was the Reverend Lancelot Addison, who, though eclipsed by his more celebrated son, made some figure in the world, and occupies with credit two folio pages in the Biographia Britannica. Lancelot was sent up as a poor scholar from Westmoreland to Queen's College, Oxford, in the time of the Commonwealth; made some progress in learning; became, like most of his fellow-students, a violent Royalist; lampooned the heads of the university, and was forced to ask pardon on his bended knees. When he had left college he earned a humble subsistence by reading the liturgy of the fallen church to the families of those sturdy squires whose manor-houses were scattered over the Wild of Sussex. After the Restoration his loyalty was rewarded with the post of chaplain to the garrison of Dunkirk. When Dunkirk was sold to France he lost his employment. But Tangier had been ceded by Portugal to England as part of the marriage portion of the Infanta Catharine; and to Tangier Lancelot Addison was sent. A more miserable situation can hardly be conceived. It was difficult to say whether the unfortunate settlers were more tormented by the heats or by the rains, by the soldiers within the wall or by the Moors without it. One advantage the chaplain had. He enjoyed an excellent opportunity of

studying the history and manners of Jews and Mahometans; and of this opportunity he appears to have made excellent use. On his return to England, after some years of banishment, he published an interesting volume on the Polity and Religion of Barbary, and another on the Hebrew Customs and the State of Rabbinical Learning. He rose to eminence in his profession, and became one of the royal chaplains, a Doctor of Divinity, Archdeacon of Salisbury, and Dean of Lichfield. It is said that he would have been made a bishop after the Revolution if he had not given offence to the government by strenuously opposing, in the Convocation of 1689, the liberal policy of William and Tillotson.

In 1672, not long after Dr. Addison's return from Tangier, his son Joseph was born. Of Joseph's childhood we know little. He learned his rudiments at schools in his father's neighborhood, and was then sent to the Charter House. The anecdotes which are popularly related about his boyish tricks do not harmonize very well with what we know of his riper years. There remains a tradition that he was the ringleader in a barring out, and another tradition that he ran away from school and hid himself in a wood, where he fed on berries and slept in a hollow tree, till after a long search he was discovered and brought home. If these stories be true, it would be curious to know by what moral discipline so mutinous and enter-

prising a lad was transformed into the gentlest and most modest of men.

We have abundant proof that, whatever Joseph's pranks may have been, he pursued his studies vigorously and successfully. At fifteen he was not only fit for the university, but carried thither a classical taste and a stock of learning which would have done honor to a Master of Arts. He was entered at Queen's College, Oxford; but he had not been many months there when some of his Latin verses fell by accident into the hands of Dr. Lancaster, Dean of Magdalene College. The young scholar's diction and versification were already such as veteran professors might envy. Dr. Lancaster was desirous to serve a boy of such promise; nor was an opportunity long wanting. The Revolution had just taken place; and nowhere had it been hailed with more delight than at Magdalene College. That great and opulent corporation had been treated by James and by his chancellor with an insolence and injustice which, even in such a prince and in such a minister, may justly excite amazement, and which had done more than even the prosecution of the bishops to alienate the Church of England from the throne. A president, duly elected, had been violently expelled from his dwelling: a Papist had been set over the society by a royal mandate: the Fellows, who, in conformity with their oaths, had refused to submit to this usurper, had been driven forth

from their quiet cloisters and gardens, to die of want or to live on charity. But the day of redress and retribution speedily came. The intruders were ejected: the venerable House was again inhabited by its old inmates: learning flourished under the rule of the wise and virtuous Hough; and with learning was united a mild and liberal spirit too often wanting in the princely colleges of Oxford. In consequence of the troubles through which the society had passed, there had been no valid election of new members during the year 1688. In 1689, therefore, there was twice the ordinary number of vacancies; and thus Dr. Lancaster found it easy to procure for his young friend admittance to the advantages of a foundation then generally esteemed the wealthiest in Europe.

At Magdalene Addison resided during ten years. He was at first one of those scholars who are called Demies, but was subsequently elected a fellow. His college is still proud of his name; his portrait still hangs in the hall; and strangers are still told that his favorite walk was under the elms which fringe the meadow on the banks of the Cherwell. It is said, and is highly probable, that he was distinguished among his fellow-students by the delicacy of his feelings, by the shyness of his manners, and by the assiduity with which he often prolonged his studies far into the night. It is certain that his reputation for ability and learning stood high. Many years later the ancient doctors of Magdalene

continued to talk in their common room of his boyish compositions, and expressed their sorrow that no copy of exercises so remarkable had been preserved. It is proper, however, to remark that Miss Aikin has committed the error, very pardonable in a lady, of overrating Addison's classical attainments. In one department of learning, indeed, his proficiency was such as it is hardly possible to overrate. His knowledge of the Latin poets, from Lucretius and Catullus down to Claudian and Prudentius, was singularly exact and profound. He understood them thoroughly, entered into their spirit, and had the finest and most discriminating perception of all their peculiarities of style and melody; nay, he copied their manner with admirable skill, and surpassed, we think, all their British imitators who had preceded him, Buchanan and Milton alone excepted. This is high praise; and beyond this we cannot with justice go. It is clear that Addison's serious attention during his residence at the university was almost entirely concentrated on Latin poetry, and that, if he did not wholly neglect other provinces of ancient literature, he vouchsafed to them only a cursory glance. He does not appear to have attained more than an ordinary acquaintance with the political and moral writers of Rome; nor was his own Latin prose by any means equal to his Latin verse. His knowledge of Greek, though doubtless such as was in his time thought respectable at Oxford, was

evidently less than that which many lads now carry away every year from Eton and Rugby. A minute examination of his works, if we had time to make such an examination, would fully bear out these remarks. We will briefly advert to a few of the facts on which our judgment is grounded.

Great praise is due to the Notes which Addison appended to his version of the second and third books of the Metamorphoses. Yet those notes, while they show him to have been, in his own domain, an accomplished scholar, show also how confined that domain was. They are rich in apposite references to Virgil, Statius, and Claudian; but they contain not a single illustration drawn from the Greek poets. Now, if in the whole compass of Latin literature there be a passage which stands in need of illustration drawn from the Greek poets, it is the story of Pentheus in the third book of the Metamorphoses. Ovid was indebted for that story to Euripides and Theocritus, both of whom he has sometimes followed minutely. But neither to Euripides nor to Theocritus does Addison make the faintest allusion; and we, therefore, believe that we do not wrong him by supposing that he had little or no knowledge of their works.

His travels in Italy, again, abound with classical quotations, happily introduced; but scarcely one of those quotations is in prose. He draws more illustrations from Ausonius and Manilius than from

Cicero. Even his notions of the political and military affairs of the Romans seem to be derived from poets and poetasters. Spots made memorable by events which have changed the destinies of the world, and which have been worthily recorded by great historians, bring to his mind only scraps of some ancient versifier. In the gorge of the Apennines he naturally remembers the hardships which Hannibal's army endured, and proceeds to cite, not the authentic narrative of Polybius, not the picturesque narrative of Livy, but the languid hexameters of Silius Italicus. On the banks of the Rubicon he never thinks of Plutarch's lively description, or of the stern conciseness of the Commentaries, or of those letters to Atticus which so forcibly express the alternations of hope and fear in a sensitive mind at a great crisis. His only authority for the events of the civil war is Lucan.

All the best ancient works of art at Rome and Florence are Greek. Addison saw them, however, without recalling one single verse of Pindar, of Callimachus, or of the Attic dramatists; but they brought to his recollection innumerable passages of Horace, Juvenal, Statius, and Ovid.

The same may be said of the Treatise on Medals In that pleasing work we find about three hundred passages extracted with great judgment from the Roman poets; but we do not recollect a single passage taken from any Roman orator or historian; and we are confident that not a line

is quoted from any Greek writer. No person, who had derived all his information on the subject of medals from Addison, would suspect that the Greek coins were in historical interest equal, and in beauty of execution far superior, to those of Rome.

If it were necessary to find any further proof that Addison's classical knowledge was confined within narrow limits, that proof would be furnished by his Essay on the Evidences of Christianity. The Roman poets throw little or no light on the literary and historical questions which he is under the necessity of examining in that essay. He is, therefore, left completely in the dark; and it is melancholy to see how helplessly he gropes his way from blunder to blunder. He assigns, as grounds for his religious belief, stories as absurd as that of the Cock-Lane ghost, and forgeries as rank as Ireland's Vortigern; puts faith in the lie about the Thundering Legion; is convinced that Tiberius moved the senate to admit Jesus among the gods; and pronounces the letter of Agbarus, King of Edessa, to be a record of great authority. Nor were these errors the effects of superstition; for to superstition Addison was by no means prone. The truth is, that he was writing about what he did not understand.

Miss Aikin has discovered a letter from which it appears that, while Addison resided at Oxford, he was one of several writers whom the booksellers

engaged to make an English version of Herodotus; and she infers that he must have been a good Greek scholar. We can allow very little weight to this argument, when we consider that his fellow-laborers were to have been Boyle and Blackmore. Boyle is remembered chiefly as the nominal author of the worst book on Greek history and philology that ever was printed; and this book, bad as it is, Boyle was unable to produce without help. Of Blackmore's attainments in the ancient tongues, it may be sufficient to say that, in his prose, he has confounded an aphorism with an apophthegm, and that when, in his verse, he treats of classical subjects, his habit is to regale his readers with four false quantities to a page.

It is probable that the classical acquirements of Addison were of as much service to him as if they had been more extensive. The world generally gives its admiration, not to the man who does what nobody else even attempts to do, but to the man who does best what multitudes do well. Bentley was so immeasurably superior to all the other scholars of his time that few among them could discover his superiority. But the accomplishment in which Addison excelled his contemporaries was then, as it is now, highly valued and assiduously cultivated at all English seats of learning. Everybody who had been at a public school had written Latin verses; many had written such verses with tolerable success, and were quite able

to appreciate, though by no means able to rival, the skill with which Addison imitated Virgil. His lines on the Barometer and the Bowling Green were applauded by hundreds, to whom the Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris was as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics on an obelisk.

Purity of style, and an easy flow of numbers, are common to all Addison's Latin poems. Our favorite piece is the Battle of the Cranes and Pygmies; for in that piece we discern a gleam of the fancy and humor which many years later enlivened thousands of breakfast-tables. Swift boasted that he was never known to steal a hint; and he certainly owed as little to his predecessors as any modern writer. Yet we cannot help suspecting that he borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, one of the happiest touches in his Voyage of Lilliput from Addison's verses. Let our readers judge.

"The Emperor," says Gulliver, "is taller by about the breadth of my nail than any of his court, which alone is enough to strike an awe into the beholders."

About thirty years before Gulliver's Travels appeared, Addison wrote these lines:—

> "Jamque acies inter medias sese arduus infert
> Pygmeadum ductor, qui, majestate verendus,
> Incessuque gravis, reliquos supereminet omnes
> Mole gigantea, mediamque exsurgit in ulnam."

The Latin poems of Addison were greatly and justly admired both at Oxford and Cambridge,

before his name had ever been heard by the wits who thronged the coffee-houses round Drury-Lane Theatre. In his twenty-second year he ventured to appear before the public as a writer of English verse. He addressed some complimentary lines to Dryden, who, after many triumphs and many reverses, had at length reached a secure and lonely eminence among the literary men of that age. Dryden appears to have been much gratified by the young scholar's praise; and an interchange of civilities and good offices followed. Addison was probably introduced by Dryden to Congreve, and was certainly presented by Congreve to Charles Montague, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and leader of the Whig party in the House of Commons.

At this time Addison seemed inclined to devote himself to poetry. He published a translation of part of the fourth Georgic, Lines to King William, and other performances of equal value; that is to say, of no value at all. But in those days, the public was in the habit of receiving with applause pieces which would now have little chance of obtaining the Newdigate prize or the Seatonian prize. And the reason is obvious. The heroic couplet was then the favorite measure. The art of arranging words in that measure, so that the lines may flow smoothly, that the accents may fall correctly, that the rhymes may strike the ear strongly, and that there may be a pause at the end

of every distich, is an art as mechanical as that of mending a kettle or shoeing a horse, and may be learned by any human being who has sense enough to learn anything. But, like other mechanical arts, it was gradually improved by means of many experiments and many failures. It was reserved for Pope to discover the trick, to make himself complete master of it, and to teach it to everybody else. From the time when his Pastorals appeared, heroic versification became matter of rule and compass; and, before long, all artists were on a level. Hundreds of dunces who never blundered on one happy thought or expression were able to write reams of couplets which, as far as euphony was concerned, could not be distinguished from those of Pope himself, and which very clever writers of the reign of Charles the Second,—Rochester, for example, or Marvel, or Oldham,—would have contemplated with admiring despair.

Ben Jonson was a great man, Hoole a very small man. But Hoole, coming after Pope, had learned how to manufacture decasyllable verses, and poured them forth by thousands and tens of thousands, all as well turned, as smooth, and as like each other as the blocks which have passed through Mr. Brunel's mill in the dockyard at Portsmouth. Ben's heroic couplets resemble blocks rudely hewn out by an unpractised hand with a blunt hatchet. Take as a specimen his translation of a celebrated passage in the Æneid:—

"This child our parent earth, stirred up with spite
Of all the gods, brought forth, and, as some write,
She was last sister of that giant race
That sought to scale Jove's court, right swift of pace,
And swifter far of wing, a monster vast
And dreadful. Look, how many plumes are placed
On her huge corpse, so many waking eyes
Stick underneath, and, which may stranger rise
In the report, as many tongues she wears."

Compare with these jagged misshapen distichs the neat fabric which Hoole's machine produces in unlimited abundance. We take the first lines on which we open in his version of Tasso. They are neither better nor worse than the rest:—

"O thou, whoe'er thou art, whose steps are led,
By choice or fate, these lonely shores to tread,
No greater wonders east or west can boast
Than yon small island on the pleasing coast.
If e'er thy sight would blissful scenes explore,
The current pass, and seek the further shore."

Ever since the time of Pope there has been a glut of lines of this sort; and we are now as little disposed to admire a man for being able to write them, as for being able to write his name. But in the days of William the Third such versification was rare; and a rhymer who had any skill in it passed for a great poet, just as in the dark ages a person who could write his name passed for a great clerk. Accordingly, Duke, Stepney, Granville, Walsh, and others whose only title to fame was

that they said in tolerable metre what might have been as well said in prose, or what was not worth saying at all, were honored with marks of distinction which ought to be reserved for genius. With these Addison must have ranked, if he had not earned true and lasting glory by performances which very little resembled his juvenile poems.

Dryden was now busied with Virgil, and obtained from Addison a critical preface to the Georgics. In return for this service, and for other services of the same kind, the veteran poet, in the postscript to the translation of the Æneid, complimented his young friend with great liberality, and indeed with more liberality than sincerity. He affected to be afraid that his own performance would not sustain a comparison with the version of the fourth Georgic, by "the most ingenious Mr. Addison of Oxford." "After his bees," added Dryden, "my latter swarm is scarcely worth the hiving."

The time had now arrived when it was necessary for Addison to choose a calling. Everything seemed to point his course towards the clerical profession. His habits were regular, his opinions orthodox. His college had large ecclesiastical preferment in its gift, and boasts that it has given at least one bishop to almost every see in England. Dr. Lancelot Addison held an honorable place in the church, and had set his heart on seeing his son a clergyman. It is clear, from some expressions

in the young man's rhymes, that his intention was to take orders. But Charles Montague interfered. Montague had first brought himself into notice by verses, well-timed and not contemptibly written, but never, we think, rising above mediocrity. Fortunately for himself and for his country, he early quitted poetry, in which he could never have attained a rank as high as that of Dorset or Rochester, and turned his mind to official and parliamentary business. It is written that the ingenious person who undertook to instruct Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia, in the art of flying, ascended an eminence, waved his wings, sprang into the air, and instantly dropped into the lake. But it is added that the wings, which were unable to support him through the sky, bore him up effectually as soon as he was in the water. This is no bad type of the fate of Charles Montague, and of men like him. When he attempted to soar into the regions of poetical invention, he altogether failed; but, as soon as he had descended from that ethereal elevation into a lower and grosser element, his talents instantly raised him above the mass. He became a distinguished financier, debater, courtier, and party leader. He still retained his fondness for the pursuits of his early days; but he showed that fondness not by wearying the public with his own feeble performances, but by discovering and encouraging literary excellence in others. A crowd of wits and poets, who would

easily have vanquished him as a competitor, revered him as a judge and a patron. In his plans for the encouragement of learning, he was cordially supported by the ablest and most virtuous of his colleagues, the Lord Chancellor Somers. Though both these great statesmen had a sincere love of letters, it was not solely from a love of letters that they were desirous to enlist youths of high intellectual qualifications in the public service. The Revolution had altered the whole system of government. Before that event the press had been controlled by censors, and the parliament had sat only two months in eight years. Now the press was free, and had begun to exercise unprecedented influence on the public mind. Parliament met annually, and sat long. The chief power in the state had passed to the House of Commons. At such a conjuncture, it was natural that literary and oratorical talents should rise in value. There was danger that a government which neglected such talents might be subverted by them. It was, therefore, a profound and enlightened policy which led Montague and Somers to attach such talents to the Whig party, by the strongest ties both of interest and of gratitude.

It is remarkable that, in a neighboring country, we have recently seen similar effects follow from similar causes. The Revolution of July 1830 established representative government in France. The men of letters instantly rose to the highest im-

portance in the state. At the present moment most of the persons whom we see at the head both of the Administration and of the Opposition, have been professors, historians, journalists, poets. The influence of the literary class in England, during the generation which followed the Revolution, was great, but by no means so great as it has lately been in France. For, in England, the aristocracy of intellect had to contend with a powerful and deeply rooted aristocracy of a very different kind. France had no Somersets and Shrewsburies to keep down her Addisons and Priors.

It was in the year 1699, when Addison had just completed his twenty-seventh year, that the course of his life was finally determined. Both the great chiefs of the Ministry were kindly disposed towards him. In political opinions he already was, what he continued to be through life, a firm, though a moderate Whig. He had addressed the most polished and vigorous of his early English lines to Somers, and had dedicated to Montague a Latin poem, truly Virgilian, both in style and rhythm, on the peace of Ryswick. The wish of the young poet's great friends was, it should seem, to employ him in the service of the crown abroad. But an intimate knowledge of the French language was a qualification indispensable to a diplomatist; and this qualification Addison had not acquired. It was, therefore, thought desirable that he should pass some time on the Continent in preparing him-

self for official employment. His own means were not such as would enable him to travel; but a pension of three hundred pounds a year was procured for him by the interest of the Lord Chancellor. It seems to have been apprehended that some difficulty might be started by the rulers of Magdalene College. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote in the strongest terms to Hough. The state —such was the purport of Montague's letter— could not, at that time, spare to the church such a man as Addison. Too many high civil posts were already occupied by adventurers, who, destitute of every liberal art and sentiment, at once pillaged and disgraced the country which they pretended to serve. It had become necessary to recruit for the public service from a very different class, from that class of which Addison was the representative. The close of the Minister's letter was remarkable. "I am called," he said, "an enemy of the church. But I will never do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."

This interference was successful; and, in the summer of 1699, Addison, made a rich man by his pension, and still retaining his fellowship, quitted his beloved Oxford, and set out on his travels. He crossed from Dover to Calais, proceeded to Paris, and was received there with great kindness and politeness by a kinsman of his friend Montague, Charles Earl of Manchester, who had just been appointed Ambassador to the Court of France.

The countess, a Whig and a toast, was probably as gracious as her lord; for Addison long retained an agreeable recollection of the impression which she at this time made on him, and, in some lively lines written on the glasses of the Kit Cat Club, described the envy which her cheeks, glowing with the genuine bloom of England, had excited among the painted beauties of Versailles.

Louis the Fourteenth was at this time expiating the vices of his youth by a devotion which had no root in reason, and bore no fruit of charity. The servile literature of France had changed its character to suit the changed character of the prince. No book appeared that had not an air of sanctity. Racine, who was just dead, had passed the close of his life in writing sacred dramas; and Dacier was seeking for the Athanasian mysteries in Plato. Addison described this state of things in a short but lively and graceful letter to Montague. Another letter, written about the same time to the Lord Chancellor, conveyed the strongest assurances of gratitude and attachment. "The only return I can make to your Lordship," said Addison, "will be to apply myself entirely to my business." With this view he quitted Paris and repaired to Blois, a place where it was supposed that the French language was spoken in its highest purity, and where not a single Englishman could be found. Here he passed some months pleasantly and profitably. Of his way of life at Blois, one of

his associates, an abbé named Philippeaux, gave an account to Joseph Spence. If this account is to be trusted, Addison studied much, mused much, talked little, had fits of absence, and either had no love affairs, or was too discreet to confide them to the abbé. A man who, even when surrounded by fellow-countrymen and fellow-students, had always been remarkably shy and silent, was not likely to be loquacious in a foreign tongue, and among foreign companions. But it is clear from Addison's letters, some of which were long after published in the *Guardian*, that, while he appeared to be absorbed in his own meditations, he was really observing French society with that keen and sly, yet not ill-natured side-glance, which was peculiarly his own.

From Blois he returned to Paris; and, having now mastered the French language, found great pleasure in the society of French philosophers and poets. He gave an account in a letter to Bishop Hough, of two highly interesting conversations, one with Malebranche, the other with Boileau. Malebranche expressed great partiality for the English, and extolled the genius of Newton, but shook his head when Hobbes was mentioned, and was indeed so unjust as to call the author of the Leviathan a poor silly creature. Addison's modesty restrained him from fully relating, in his letter, the circumstances of his introduction to Boileau. Boileau, having survived the friends

and rivals of his youth, old, deaf, and melancholy, lived in retirement, seldom went either to Court or to the Academy, and was almost inaccessible to strangers. Of the English and of English literature he knew nothing. He had hardly heard the name of Dryden. Some of our countrymen, in the warmth of their patriotism, have asserted that this ignorance must have been affected. We own that we see no ground for such a supposition. English literature was to the French of the age of Louis the Fourteenth what German literature was to our own grandfathers. Very few, we suspect, of the accomplished men who, sixty or seventy years ago, used to dine in Leicester Square with Sir Joshua, or at Streatham with Mrs. Thrale, had the slightest notion that Wieland was one of the first wits and poets, and Lessing, beyond all dispute, the first critic in Europe. Boileau knew just as little about the Paradise Lost and about Absalom and Achitophel; but he had read Addison's Latin poems, and admired them greatly. They had given him, he said, quite a new notion of the state of learning and taste among the English. Johnson will have it that these praises were insincere. "Nothing," says he, "is better known of Boileau than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin; and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation." Now, nothing is better known of Boileau than that he was singularly

sparing of compliments. We do not remember that either friendship or fear ever induced him to bestow praise on any composition which he did not approve. On literary questions, his caustic, disdainful, and self-confident spirit rebelled against that authority to which everything else in France bowed down. He had the spirit to tell Louis the Fourteenth firmly and even rudely, that his majesty knew nothing about poetry, and admired verses which were detestable. What was there in Addison's position that could induce the satirist, whose stern and fastidious temper had been the dread of two generations, to turn sycophant for the first and last time? Nor was Boileau's contempt of modern Latin either injudicious or peevish. He thought, indeed, that no poem of the first order would ever be written in a dead language. And did he think amiss? Has not the experience of centuries confirmed his opinion? Boileau also thought it probable that, in the best modern Latin, a writer of the Augustan age would have detected ludicrous improprieties. And who can think otherwise? What modern scholar can honestly declare that he sees the smallest impurity in the style of Livy? Yet is it not certain that, in the style of Livy, Pollio, whose taste had been formed on the banks of the Tiber, detected the inelegant idiom of the Po? Has any modern scholar understood Latin better than Frederic the Great understood French? Yet is it not notorious

that Frederic the Great, after reading, speaking, writing French, and nothing but French, during more than half a century, after unlearning his mother tongue in order to learn French, after living familiarly during many years with French associates, could not, to the last, compose in French, without imminent risk of committing some mistake which would have moved a smile in the literary circles of Paris? Do we believe that Erasmus and Fracastorius wrote Latin as well as Dr. Robertson and Sir Walter Scott wrote English? And are there not in the Dissertation on India, the last of Dr. Robertson's works, in Waverley, in Marmion, Scotticisms at which a London apprentice would laugh? But does it follow, because we think thus, that we can find nothing to admire in the noble alcaics of Gray, or in the playful elegiacs of Vincent Bourne? Surely not. Nor was Boileau so ignorant or tasteless as to be incapable of appreciating good modern Latin. In the very letter to which Johnson alludes, Boileau says, "Ne croyez pas pourtant que je veuille par là blâmer les vers Latins que vous m'avez envoyés d'un de vos illustres académiciens. Je les ai trouvés fort beaux, et dignes de Vida et de Sannazar, mais non pas d'Horace et de Virgile." Several poems in modern Latin have been praised by Boileau quite as liberally as it was his habit to praise anything. He says, for example, of the Père Fraguier's epigrams, that Catullus seems to

have come to life again. But the best proof that Boileau did not feel the undiscerning contempt for modern Latin verses which has been imputed to him, is that he wrote and published Latin verses in several metres. Indeed, it happens, curiously enough, that the most severe censure ever pronounced by him on modern Latin is conveyed in Latin hexameters. We allude to the fragment which begins:—

> "Quid numeris iterum me balbutire Latinis,
> Longe Alpes citra natum de patre Sicambro,
> Musa, jubes?"

For these reasons we feel assured that the praise which Boileau bestowed on the *Machinæ Gesticulantes*, and the *Gerano-Pygmæomachia*, was sincere. He certainly opened himself to Addison with a freedom which was a sure indication of esteem. Literature was the chief subject of conversation. The old man talked on his favorite theme much and well, — indeed, as his young hearer thought, incomparably well. Boileau had undoubtedly some of the qualities of a great critic. He wanted imagination; but he had strong sense. His literary code was formed on narrow principles; but in applying it he showed great judgment and penetration. In mere style, abstracted from the ideas of which style is the garb, his taste was excellent. He was well acquainted with the great Greek writers, and, though unable fully to appreciate their creative genius, admired the majestic

simplicity of their manner, and had learned from them to despise bombast and tinsel. It is easy, we think, to discover in the *Spectator* and the *Guardian* traces of the influence, in part salutary and in part pernicious, which the mind of Boileau had on the mind of Addison.

While Addison was at Paris, an event took place which made that capital a disagreeable residence for an Englishman and a Whig. Charles, second of the name, King of Spain, died, and bequeathed his dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, a younger son of the Dauphin. The King of France, in direct violation of his engagements, both with Great Britain and with the States General, accepted the bequest on behalf of his grandson. The house of Bourbon was at the summit of human grandeur. England had been outwitted, and found herself in a situation at once degrading and perilous. The people of France, not presaging the calamities by which they were destined to expiate the perfidy of their sovereign, went mad with pride and delight. Every man looked as if a great estate had just been left him. "The French conversation," said Addison, "begins to grow insupportable; that which was before the vainest nation in the world, is now worse than ever." Sick of the arrogant exultation of the Parisians, and probably foreseeing that the peace between France and England could not be of long duration, he set off for Italy.

In December, 1700, he embarked at Marseilles. As he glided along the Ligurian coast, he was delighted by the sight of myrtles and olive-trees, which retained their verdure under the winter solstice. Soon, however, he encountered one of the black storms of the Mediterranean. The captain of the ship gave up all for lost, and confessed himself to a capuchin who happened to be on board. The English heretic, in the meantime, fortified himself against the terrors of death with devotions of a very different kind. How strong an impression this perilous voyage made on him appears from the ode, "How are thy servants blest, O Lord!" which was long after published in the *Spectator*. After some days of discomfort and danger, Addison was glad to land at Savona, and to make his way, over mountains where no road had yet been hewn out by art, to the city of Genoa.

At Genoa, still ruled by her own doge, and by the nobles whose names were inscribed on her Book of Gold, Addison made a short stay. He admired the narrow streets overhung by long lines of towering palaces, the walls rich with frescoes, the gorgeous temple of the Annunciation, and the tapestries whereon were recorded the long glories of the house of Doria. Thence he hastened to Milan, where he contemplated the Gothic magnificence of the cathedral with more wonder than pleasure. He passed Lake Benacus while a gale

was blowing, and saw the waves raging as they raged when Virgil looked upon them. At Venice, then the gayest spot in Europe, the traveller spent the Carnival, the gayest season of the year, in the midst of masks, dances, and serenades. Here he was at once diverted and provoked by the absurd dramatic pieces which then disgraced the Italian stage. To one of those pieces, however, he was indebted for a valuable hint. He was present when a ridiculous play on the death of Cato was performed. Cato, it seems, was in love with a daughter of Scipio. The lady had given her heart to Cæsar. The rejected lover determined to destroy himself. He appeared seated in his library, a dagger in his hand, a Plutarch and a Tasso before him; and, in this position, he pronounced a soliloquy before he struck the blow. We are surprised that so remarkable a circumstance as this should have escaped the notice of all Addison's biographers. There cannot, we conceive, be the smallest doubt that this scene, in spite of its absurdities and anachronisms, struck the traveller's imagination, and suggested to him the thought of bringing Cato on the English stage. It is well known that about this time he began his tragedy, and that he finished the first four acts before he returned to England.

On his way from Venice to Rome, he was drawn some miles out of the beaten road by a wish to see the smallest independent state in Europe. On a

rock where the snow still lay, though the Italian spring was now far advanced, was perched the little fortress of San Marino. The roads which led to the secluded town were so bad that few travellers had ever visited it, and none had ever published an account of it. Addison could not suppress a good-natured smile at the simple manners and institutions of this singular community. But he observed, with the exultation of a Whig, that the rude mountain tract which formed the territory of the republic swarmed with an honest, healthy, and contented peasantry, while the rich plain which surrounded the metropolis of civil and spiritual tyranny was scarcely less desolate than the uncleared wilds of America.

At Rome Addison remained on his first visit only long enough to catch a glimpse of St. Peter's and of the Pantheon. His haste is the more extraordinary because the Holy Week was close at hand. He has given no hint which can enable us to pronounce why he chose to fly from a spectacle which every year allures from distant regions persons of far less taste and sensibility than his. Possibly, travelling, as he did, at the charge of a government distinguished by its enmity to the Church of Rome, he may have thought that it would be imprudent in him to assist at the most magnificent rite of that church. Many eyes would be upon him, and he might find it difficult to behave in such a manner as to give offence neither to his

patrons in England, nor to those among whom he resided. Whatever his motives may have been, he turned his back on the most august and affecting ceremony which is known among men, and posted along the Appian way to Naples.

Naples was then destitute of what are now, perhaps, its chief attractions. The lovely bay and the awful mountain were indeed there; but a farmhouse stood on the theatre of Herculaneum, and rows of vines grew over the streets of Pompeii. The temples of Pæstum had not indeed been hidden from the eye of man by any great convulsion of nature; but, strange to say, their existence was a secret even to artists and antiquaries. Though situated within a few hours' journey of a great capital, where Salvator had not long before painted, and where Vico was then lecturing, those noble remains were as little known to Europe as the ruined cities overgrown by the forests of Yucatan. What was to be seen at Naples Addison saw. He climbed Vesuvius, explored the tunnel of Posilipo, and wandered among the vines and almond-trees of Capreæ. But neither the wonders of nature, nor those of art, could so occupy his attention as to prevent him from noticing, though cursorily, the abuses of the government and the misery of the people. The great kingdom which had just descended to Philip the Fifth, was in a state of paralytic dotage. Even Castile and Aragon were sunk in wretchedness. Yet, compared

with the Italian dependencies of the Spanish crown, Castile and Aragon might be called prosperous. It is clear that all the observations which Addison made in Italy tended to confirm him in the political opinions which he had adopted at home. To the last he always spoke of foreign travel as the best cure for Jacobitism. In his *Freeholder* the Tory fox-hunter asks what travelling is good for, except to teach a man to jabber French and to talk against passive obedience.

From Naples, Addison returned to Rome by sea, along the coast which his favorite Virgil had celebrated. The felucca passed the headland where the oar and trumpet were placed by the Trojan adventurers on the tomb of Misenus, and anchored at night under the shelter of the fabled promontory of Circe. The voyage ended in the Tiber, still overhung with dark verdure, and still turbid with yellow sand, as when it met the eyes of Æneas. From the ruined port of Ostia, the stranger hurried to Rome; and at Rome he remained during those hot and sickly months, when, even in the Augustan age, all who could make their escape fled from mad dogs and from streets black with funerals, to gather the first figs of the season in the country. It is probable that, when he, long after, poured forth in verse his gratitude to the Providence which had enabled him to breathe unhurt in tainted air, he was thinking of the August and September which he passed at Rome.

It was not till the latter end of October that he tore himself away from the masterpieces of ancient and modern art which are collected in the city so long the mistress of the world. He then journeyed northward, passed through Sienna, and for a moment forgot his prejudices in favor of classic architecture as he looked on the magnificent cathedral. At Florence he spent some days with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who, cloyed with the pleasures of ambition, and impatient of its pains, fearing both parties, and loving neither, had determined to hide in an Italian retreat talents and accomplishments which, if they had been united with fixed principles and civil courage, might have made him the foremost man of his age. These days, we are told, passed pleasantly; and we can easily believe it. For Addison was a delightful companion when he was at his ease; and the duke, though he seldom forgot that he was a Talbot, had the invaluable art of putting at ease all who came near him.

Addison gave some time to Florence, and especially to the sculptures in the Museum, which he preferred even to those of the Vatican. He then pursued his journey through a country in which the ravages of the last war were still discernible, and in which all men were looking forward with dread to a still fiercer conflict. Eugene had already descended from the Rhætian Alps, to dispute with Catinat the rich plain of Lombardy.

The faithless ruler of Savoy was still reckoned among the allies of Louis. England had not yet actually declared war against France: but Manchester had left Paris; and the negotiations which produced the Grand Alliance against the house of Bourbon were in progress. Under such circumstances, it was desirable for an English traveller to reach neutral ground without delay. Addison resolved to cross Mont Cenis. It was December; and the road was very different from that which now reminds the stranger of the power and genius of Napoleon. The winter, however, was mild; and the passage was, for those times, easy. To this journey Addison alluded when, in the ode which we have already quoted, he said that for him the Divine goodness had warmed the hoary Alpine hills.

It was in the midst of the eternal snow that he composed his Epistle to his friend Montague, now Lord Halifax. That Epistle, once widely renowned, is now known only to curious readers, and will hardly be considered by those to whom it is known as in any perceptible degree heightening Addison's fame. It is, however, decidedly superior to any English composition which he had previously published. Nay, we think it quite as good as any poem in heroic metre which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the publication of the Essay on Criticism. It contains passages as good as the second-rate passages

of Pope, and would have added to the reputation of Parnell or Prior.

But, whatever be the literary merits or defects of the Epistle, it undoubtedly does honor to the principles and spirit of the author. Halifax had now nothing to give. He had fallen from power, had been held up to obloquy, had been impeached by the House of Commons, and, though his peers had dismissed the impeachment, had, as it seemed, little chance of ever again filling high office. The Epistle, written at such a time, is one among many proofs that there was no mixture of cowardice or meanness in the suavity and moderation which distinguished Addison from all the other public men of those stormy times.

At Geneva, the traveller learned that a partial change of ministry had taken place in England, and that the Earl of Manchester had become Secretary of State. Manchester exerted himself to serve his young friend. It was thought advisable that an English agent should be near the person of Eugene in Italy; and Addison, whose diplomatic education was now finished, was the man selected. He was preparing to enter on his honorable functions, when all his prospects were for a time darkened by the death of William the Third.

Anne had long felt a strong aversion, personal, political, and religious, to the Whig party. That aversion appeared in the first measures of her reign. Manchester was deprived of the seals,

after he had held them only a few weeks. Neither Somers nor Halifax was sworn of the Privy Council. Addison shared the fate of his three patrons. His hopes of employment in the public service were at an end; his pension was stopped; and it was necessary for him to support himself by his own exertions. He became tutor to a young English traveller, and appears to have rambled with his pupil over great part of Switzerland and Germany. At this time he wrote his pleasing treatise on Medals. It was not published till after his death; but several distinguished scholars saw the manuscript, and gave just praise to the grace of the style, and to the learning and ingenuity evinced by the quotations.

From Germany, Addison repaired to Holland, where he learned the melancholy news of his father's death. After passing some months in the United Provinces, he returned about the close of the year 1703 to England. He was there cordially received by his friends, and introduced by them into the Kit Cat Club, a society in which were collected all the various talents and accomplishments which then gave lustre to the Whig party.

Addison was, during some months after his return from the Continent, hard pressed by pecuniary difficulties. But it was soon in the power of his noble patrons to serve him effectually. A political change, silent and gradual, but of the highest importance, was in daily progress. The

accession of Anne had been hailed by the Tories with transports of joy and hope; and for a time it seemed that the Whigs had fallen never to rise again. The throne was surrounded by men supposed to be attached to the prerogative and to the church; and among these none stood so high in the favor of the sovereign as the Lord-Treasurer Godolphin and the Captain-General Marlborough.

The country gentlemen and country clergymen had fully expected that the policy of these ministers would be directly opposed to that which had been almost constantly followed by William; that the landed interest would be favored at the expense of trade; that no additions would be made to the funded debt; that the privileges conceded to Dissenters by the late king would be curtailed, if not withdrawn; that the war with France, if there must be such a war, would, on our part, be almost entirely naval; and that the government would avoid close connections with foreign powers, and, above all, with Holland.

But the country gentlemen and country clergymen were fated to be deceived, not for the last time. The prejudices and passions which raged without control in vicarages, in cathedral closes, and in the manor-houses of fox-hunting squires, were not shared by the chiefs of the ministry. Those statesmen saw that it was both for the public interest, and for their own interest, to adopt a Whig policy, at least as respected the alliances of

the country and the conduct of the war. But, if the foreign policy of the Whigs were adopted, it was impossible to abstain from adopting also their financial policy. The natural consequences followed. The rigid Tories were alienated from the government. The votes of the Whigs became necessary to it. The votes of the Whigs could be secured only by further concessions; and further concessions the Queen was induced to make.

At the beginning of the year 1704, the state of parties bore a close analogy to the state of parties in 1826. In 1826, as in 1704, there was a Tory ministry divided into two hostile sections. The position of Mr. Canning and his friends in 1826 corresponded to that which Marlborough and Godolphin occupied in 1704. Nottingham and Jersey were in 1704 what Lord Eldon and Lord Westmoreland were in 1826. The Whigs of 1704 were in a situation resembling that in which the Whigs of 1826 stood. In 1704, Somers, Halifax, Sunderland, Cowper, were not in office. There was no avowed coalition between them and the moderate Tories. It is probable that no direct communication tending to such a coalition had yet taken place; yet all men saw that such a coalition was inevitable, nay, that it was already half formed. Such, or nearly such, was the state of things when tidings arrived of the great battle fought at Blenheim on the 13th August, 1704. By the Whigs the news was hailed with transports

of joy and pride. No fault, no cause of quarrel, could be remembered by them against the commander whose genius had, in one day, changed the face of Europe, saved the Imperial throne, humbled the house of Bourbon, and secured the Act of Settlement against foreign hostility. The feeling of the Tories was very different. They could not indeed, without imprudence, openly express regret at an event so glorious to their country; but their congratulations were so cold and sullen as to give deep disgust to the victorious general and his friends.

Godolphin was not a reading man. Whatever time he could spare from business he was in the habit of spending at Newmarket or at the card-table. But he was not absolutely indifferent to poetry; and he was too intelligent an observer not to perceive that literature was a formidable engine of political warfare, and that the great Whig leaders had strengthened their party and raised their character by extending a liberal and judicious patronage to good writers. He was mortified, and not without reason, by the exceeding badness of the poems which appeared in honor of the battle of Blenheim. One of those poems has been rescued from oblivion by the exquisite absurdity of three lines:—

> "Think of two thousand gentlemen at least,
> And each man mounted on his capering beast;
> Into the Danube they were pushed by shoals."

Where to procure better verses the treasurer did not know. He understood how to negotiate a

loan, or remit a subsidy; he was also well versed in the history of running horses and fighting cocks; but his acquaintance among the poets was very small. He consulted Halifax; but Halifax affected to decline the office of adviser. He had, he said, done his best, when he had power, to encourage men whose abilities and acquirements might do honor to their country. Those times were over. Other maxims had prevailed. Merit was suffered to pine in obscurity; and the public money was squandered on the undeserving. "I do know," he added, "a gentleman who would celebrate the battle in a manner worthy of the subject, but I will not name him." Godolphin, who was an expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath, and who was under the necessity of paying court to the Whigs, gently replied that there was too much ground for Halifax's complaints, but that what was amiss should in time be rectified, and that in the meantime the services of a man such as Halifax had described should be liberally rewarded. Halifax then mentioned Addison; but, mindful of the dignity as well as of the pecuniary interest of his friend, insisted that the minister should apply in the most courteous manner to Addison himself; and this Godolphin promised to do.

Addison then occupied a garret up three pair of stairs, over a small shop in the Haymarket. In this humble lodging he was surprised, on the

morning which followed the conversation between Godolphin and Halifax, by a visit from no less a person than the Right Honorable Henry Boyle, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards Lord Carleton. This high-born minister had been sent by the Lord-Treasurer as ambassador to the needy poet. Addison readily undertook the proposed task, a task which, to so good a Whig, was probably a pleasure. When the poem was little more than half finished, he showed it to Godolphin, who was delighted with it, and particularly with the famous similitude of the Angel. Addison was instantly appointed to a commissionership worth about two hundred pounds a year, and was assured that this appointment was only an earnest of greater favors.

The Campaign came forth, and was as much admired by the public as by the minister. It pleases us less on the whole than the Epistle to Halifax. Yet it undoubtedly ranks high among the poems which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the dawn of Pope's genius. The chief merit of the Campaign, we think, is that which was noticed by Johnson, the manly and rational rejection of fiction. The first great poet whose works have come down to us sang of war long before war became a science or a trade. If, in his time, there was enmity between two little Greek towns, each poured forth its crowd of citizens, ignorant of discipline, and

armed with implements of labor rudely turned into weapons. On each side appeared conspicuous a few chiefs, whose wealth had enabled them to procure good armor, horses, and chariots, and whose leisure had enabled them to practise military exercises. One such chief, if he were a man of great strength, agility, and courage, would probably be more formidable than twenty common men; and the force and dexterity with which he flung his spear might have no inconsiderable share in deciding the event of the day. Such were probably the battles with which Homer was familiar. But Homer related the actions of men of a former generation, of men who sprang from the gods, and communed with the gods face to face; of men, one of whom could with ease hurl rocks which two sturdy hinds of a later period would be unable even to lift. He therefore naturally represented their martial exploits as resembling in kind, but far surpassing in magnitude, those of the stoutest and most expert combatants of his own age. Achilles, clad in celestial armor, drawn by celestial coursers, grasping the spear which none but himself could raise, driving all Troy and Lycia before him, and choking Scamander with dead, was only a magnificent exaggeration of the real hero, who, strong, fearless, accustomed to the use of weapons, guarded by a shield and helmet of the best Sidonian fabric, and whirled along by horses of Thessalian breed, struck down with his own right arm, foe after foe.

In all rude societies similar notions are found. There are at this day countries where the Life guardsman Shaw would be considered as a much greater warrior than the Duke of Wellington. Bonaparte loved to describe the astonishment with which the Mamelukes looked at his diminutive figure. Mourad Bey, distinguished above all his fellows by his bodily strength, and by the skill with which he managed his horse and his sabre, could not believe that a man who was scarcely five feet high, and rode like a butcher, could be the greatest soldier in Europe.

Homer's descriptions of war had therefore as much truth as poetry requires. But truth was altogether wanting to the performances of those who, writing about battles which had scarcely anything in common with the battles of his times, servilely imitated his manner. The folly of Silius Italicus, in particular, is positively nauseous. He undertook to record in verse the vicissitudes of a great struggle between generals of the first order; and his narrative is made up of the hideous wounds which these generals inflicted with their own hands. Asdrubal flings a spear, which grazes the shoulder of the consul Nero; but Nero sends his spear into Asdrubal's side. Fabius slays Thuris and Butes and Maris and Arses, and the long-haired Adherbes, and the gigantic Thylis, and Sapharus and Monæsus, and the trumpeter Morinus. Hannibal runs Perusinus through the groin

with a stake, and breaks the backbone of Telesinus with a huge stone. This detestable fashion was copied in modern times, and continued to prevail down to the age of Addison. Several versifiers had described William turning thousands to flight by his single prowess, and dyeing the Boyne with Irish blood. Nay, so estimable a writer as John Philips, the author of the Splendid Shilling, represented Marlborough as having won the battle of Blenheim merely by strength of muscle and skill in fence. The following lines may serve as an example:—

> "Churchill, viewing where
> The violence of Tallard most prevailed,
> Came to oppose his slaughtering arm. With speed
> Precipitate he rode, urging his way
> O'er hills of gasping heroes, and fallen steeds
> Rolling in death. Destruction, grim with blood,
> Attends his furious course. Around his head
> The glowing balls play innocent, while he
> With dire impetuous sway deals fatal blows
> Among the flying Gauls. In Gallic blood
> He dyes his reeking sword, and strews the ground
> With headless ranks. What can they do? Or how
> Withstand his wide-destroying sword?"

Addison, with excellent sense and taste, departed from this ridiculous fashion. He reserved his praise for the qualities which made Marlborough truly great,—energy, sagacity, military science. But, above all, the poet extolled the firmness of that mind which, in the midst of con-

fusion, uproar, and slaughter, examined and disposed everything with the serene wisdom of a higher intelligence.

Here it was that he introduced the famous comparison of Marlborough to an Angel guiding the whirlwind. We will not dispute the general justice of Johnson's remarks on this passage. But we must point out one circumstance which appears to have escaped all the critics. The extraordinary effect which this simile produced when it first appeared, and which to the following generation seemed inexplicable, is doubtless to be chiefly attributed to a line which most readers now regard as a feeble parenthesis:—

"Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia passed."

Addison spoke, not of a storm, but of the storm. The great tempest of November, 1703, the only tempest which in our latitude has equalled the rage of a tropical hurricane, had left a dreadful recollection in the minds of all men. No other tempest was ever in this country the occasion of a parliamentary address or of a public fast. Whole fleets had been cast away. Large mansions had been blown down. One prelate had been buried beneath the ruins of his palace. London and Bristol had presented the appearance of cities just sacked. Hundreds of families were still in mourning. The prostrate trunks of large trees, and the ruins of houses, still attested, in all the southern

counties, the fury of the blast. The popularity which the simile of the Angel enjoyed among Addison's contemporaries, has always seemed to us to be a remarkable instance of the advantage which, in rhetoric and poetry, the particular has over the general.

Soon after the Campaign, was published Addison's Narrative of his Travels in Italy. The first effect produced by this narrative was disappointment. The crowd of readers who expected politics and scandal, speculations on the projects of Victor Amadeus, and anecdotes about the jollities of convents and amours of cardinals and nuns, were confounded by finding that the writer's mind was much more occupied by the war between the Trojans and Rutulians than by the war between France and Austria; and that he seemed to have heard no scandal of later date than the gallantries of the Empress Faustina. In time, however, the judgment of the many was overruled by that of the few; and, before the book was reprinted, it was so eagerly sought that it sold for five times the original price. It is still read with pleasure: the style is pure and flowing; the classical quotations and allusions are numerous and happy; and we are now and then charmed by that singularly humane and delicate humor in which Addison excelled all men. Yet this agreeable work, even when considered merely as the history of a literary tour, may justly be censured on account of its faults of

omission. We have already said that, though rich in extracts from the Latin poets, it contains scarcely any references to the Latin orators and historians. We must add, that it contains little, or rather no, information respecting the history and literature of modern Italy. To the best of our remembrance, Addison does not mention Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Boiardo, Berni, Lorenzo de' Medici, or Machiavelli. He coldly tells us that at Ferrara he saw the tomb of Ariosto, and that at Venice he heard the gondoliers sing verses of Tasso. But for Tasso and Ariosto he cared far less than for Valerius Flaccus and Sidonius Apollinaris. The gentle flow of the Ticin brings a line of Silius to his mind. The sulphurous steam of Albula suggests to him several passages of Martial. But he has not a word to say of the illustrious dead of Santa Croce; he crosses the wood of Ravenna without recollecting the Spectre Huntsman; and wanders up and down Rimini without one thought of Francesca. At Paris he had eagerly sought an introduction to Boileau; but he seems not to have been at all aware that at Florence he was in the vicinity of a poet with whom Boileau could not sustain a comparison, of the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Vincenzio Filicaja. This is the more remarkable, because Filicaja was the favorite poet of the accomplished Somers, under whose protection Addison travelled, and to whom the account of the Travels is dedicated. The truth is,

that Addison knew little, and cared less, about the literature of modern Italy. His favorite models were Latin. His favorite critics were French. Half the Tuscan poetry that he had read seemed to him monstrous, and the other half tawdry.

His Travels were followed by the lively opera of Rosamond. This piece was ill set to music, and therefore failed on the stage, but it completely succeeded in print, and is indeed excellent in its kind. The smoothness with which the verses glide, and the elasticity with which they bound, is, to our ears at least, very pleasing. We are inclined to think that if Addison had left heroic couplets to Pope, and blank verse to Rowe, and had employed himself in writing airy and spirited songs, his reputation as a poet would have stood far higher than it now does. Some years after his death, Rosamond was set to new music by Doctor Arne; and was performed with complete success. Several passages long retained their popularity, and were daily sung, during the latter part of George the Second's reign, at all the harpsichords in England.

While Addison thus amused himself, his prospects, and the prospects of his party, were constantly becoming brighter and brighter. In the spring of 1705 the ministers were freed from the restraint imposed by a House of Commons in which Tories of the most perverse class had the ascendency. The elections were favorable to the Whigs. The coalition which had been tacitly and

gradually formed was now openly avowed. The Great Seal was given to Cowper. Somers and Halifax were sworn of the Council. Halifax was sent in the following year to carry the decorations of the order of the garter to the Electoral Prince of Hanover, and was accompanied on this honorable mission by Addison, who had just been made Undersecretary of State. The Secretary of State under whom Addison first served was Sir Charles Hedges, a Tory. But Hedges was soon dismissed to make room for the most vehement of Whigs, Charles, Earl of Sunderland. In every department of the state, indeed, the High Churchmen were compelled to give place to their opponents. At the close of 1707, the Tories who still remained in office strove to rally, with Harley at their head. But the attempt, though favored by the Queen, who had always been a Tory at heart, and who had now quarrelled with the Duchess of Marlborough, was unsuccessful. The time was not yet. The Captain General was at the height of popularity and glory. The Low Church party had a majority in Parliament. The country squires and rectors, though occasionally uttering a savage growl, were for the most part in a state of torpor, which lasted till they were roused into activity, and indeed into madness, by the prosecution of Sacheverell. Harley and his adherents were compelled to retire. The victory of the Whigs was complete. At the general election of 1708, their strength in the

House of Commons became irresistible; and before the end of that year, Somers was made Lord President of the Council, and Wharton Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Addison sat for Malmsbury in the House of Commons which was elected in 1708. But the House of Commons was not the field for him. The bashfulness of his nature made his wit and eloquence useless in debate. He once rose, but could not overcome his diffidence, and ever after remained silent. Nobody can think it strange that a great writer should fail as a speaker. But many, probably, will think it strange that Addison's failure as a speaker should have had no unfavorable effect on his success as a politician. In our time, a man of high rank and great fortune might, though speaking very little and very ill, hold a considerable post. But it would now be inconceivable that a mere adventurer, a man who, when out of office, must live by his pen, should in a few years become successively Undersecretary of State, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary of State, without some oratorical talent. Addison, without high birth, and with little property, rose to a post which dukes, the heads of the great houses of Talbot, Russell, and Bentinck, have thought it an honor to fill. Without opening his lips in debate, he rose to a post the highest that Chatham or Fox ever reached. And this he did before he had been nine years in Parliament. We must look for the

explanation of this seeming miracle to the peculiar circumstances in which that generation was placed. During the interval which elapsed between the time when the Censorship of the Press ceased, and the time when parliamentary proceedings began to be freely reported, literary talents were, to a public man, of much more importance, and oratorical talents of much less importance, than in our time. At present, the best way of giving rapid and wide publicity to a fact or an argument is to introduce that fact or argument into a speech made in Parliament. If a political tract were to appear superior to the Conduct of the Allies, or to the best numbers of the *Freeholder*, the circulation of such a tract would be languid indeed when compared with the circulation of every remarkable word uttered in the deliberations of the legislature. A speech made in the House of Commons at four in the morning is on thirty thousand tables before ten. A speech made on the Monday is read on the Wednesday by multitudes in Antrim and Aberdeenshire. The orator, by the help of the shorthand writer, has to a great extent superseded the pamphleteer. It was not so in the reign of Anne. The best speech could then produce no effect except on those who heard it. It was only by means of the press that the opinion of the public without doors could be influenced; and the opinion of the public without doors could not but be of the highest importance in a country governed by parliaments, and

indeed at that time governed by triennial parliaments. The pen was, therefore, a more formidable political engine than the tongue. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox contended only in Parliament. But Walpole and Pulteney, the Pitt and Fox of an earlier period, had not done half of what was necessary, when they sat down amidst the acclamations of the House of Commons. They had still to plead their cause before the country, and this they could do only by means of the press. Their works are now forgotten. But it is certain that there were in Grub Street few more assiduous scribblers of Thoughts, Letters, Answers, Remarks, than these two great chiefs of parties. Pulteney, when leader of the Opposition, and possessed of thirty thousand a year, edited the *Craftsman*. Walpole, though not a man of literary habits, was the author of at least ten pamphlets, and retouched and corrected many more. These facts sufficiently show of how great importance literary assistance then was to the contending parties. St. John was certainly, in Anne's reign, the best Tory speaker; Cowper was probably the best Whig speaker. But it may well be doubted whether St. John did so much for the Tories as Swift, and whether Cowper did so much for the Whigs as Addison. When these things are duly considered, it will not be thought strange that Addison should have climbed higher in the state than any other Englishman has ever, by means

merely of literary talents, been able to climb. Swift would, in all probability, have climbed as high, if he had not been encumbered by his cassock and his pudding sleeves. As far as the homage of the great went, Swift had as much of it as if he had been Lord-Treasurer.

To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the influence which arises from character. The world, always ready to think the worst of needy political adventurers, was forced to make one exception. Restlessness, violence, audacity, laxity of principle, are the vices ordinarily attributed to that class of men. But faction itself could not deny that Addison had, through all changes of fortune, been strictly faithful to his early opinions, and to his early friends; that his integrity was without stain; that his whole deportment indicated a fine sense of the becoming; that in the utmost heat of controversy, his zeal was tempered by a regard for truth, humanity, and social decorum; that no outrage could ever provoke him to retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman; and that his only faults were a too sensitive delicacy, and a modesty which amounted to bashfulness.

He was undoubtedly one of the most popular men of his time; and much of his popularity he owed, we believe, to that very timidity which his friends lamented. That timidity often prevented him from exhibiting his talents to the best advan-

tage. But it propitiated Nemesis. It averted that envy which would otherwise have been excited by fame so splendid, and by so rapid an elevation. No man is so great a favorite with the public as he who is at once an object of admiration, of respect, and of pity; and such were the feelings which Addison inspired. Those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing his familiar conversation, declared with one voice that it was superior even to his writings. The brilliant Mary Montague said, that she had known all the wits, and that Addison was the best company in the world. The malignant Pope was forced to own, that there was a charm in Addison's talk which could be found nowhere else. Swift, when burning with animosity against the Whigs, could not but confess to Stella that, after all, he had never known any associate so agreeable as Addison. Steele, an excellent judge of lively conversation, said, that the conversation of Addison was at once the most polite, and the most mirthful, that could be imagined; that it was Terence and Catullus in one, heightened by an exquisite something which was neither Terence nor Catullus, but Addison alone. Young, an excellent judge of serious conversation, said, that when Addison was at his ease, he went on in a noble strain of thought and language, so as to chain the attention of every hearer. Nor were Addison's great colloquial powers more admirable than the courtesy and the softness of heart which

appeared in his conversation. At the same time, it would be too much to say that he was wholly devoid of the malice which is, perhaps, inseparable from a keen sense of the ludicrous. He had one habit which both Swift and Stella applauded, and which we hardly know how to blame. If his first attempts to set a presuming dunce right were ill received, he changed his tone, "assented with civil leer," and lured the flattered coxcomb deeper and deeper into absurdity. That such was his practice we should, we think, have guessed from his works. The *Tatler's* criticisms on Mr. Softly's sonnet, and the *Spectator's* dialogue with the politician who is so zealous for the honor of Lady Q—p—t—s, are excellent specimens of this innocent mischief.

Such were Addison's talents for conversation. But his rare gifts were not exhibited to crowds or to strangers. As soon as he entered a large company, as soon as he saw an unknown face, his lips were sealed, and his manners became constrained. None who met him only in great assemblies would have been able to believe that he was the same man who had often kept a few friends listening and laughing round a table, from the time when the play ended, till the clock of St. Paul's in Covent Garden struck four. Yet, even at such a table he was not seen to the best advantage. To enjoy his conversation in the highest perfection, it was necessary to be alone with him, and to hear him, in his own phrase, think aloud. "There is no such

thing," he used to say, "as real conversation, but between two persons."

This timidity, a timidity surely neither ungraceful nor unamiable, led Addison into the two most serious faults which can with justice be imputed to him. He found that wine broke the spell which lay on his fine intellect, and was therefore too easily seduced into convivial excess. Such excess was in that age regarded, even by grave men, as the most venial of all peccadilloes, and was so far from being a mark of ill-breeding, that it was almost essential to the character of a fine gentleman. But the smallest speck is seen on a white ground; and almost all the biographers of Addison have said something about this failing. Of any other statesman or writer of Queen Anne's reign, we should no more think of saying that he sometimes took too much wine, than that he wore a long wig and a sword.

To the excessive modesty of Addison's nature we must ascribe another fault which generally arises from a very different cause. He became a little too fond of seeing himself surrounded by a small circle of admirers, to whom he was as a king, or rather as a god. All these men were far inferior to him in ability, and some of them had very serious faults. Nor did those faults escape his observation; for, if ever there was an eye which saw through and through men, it was the eye of Addison. But with the keenest observation, and the

finest sense of the ridiculous, he had a large charity. The feeling with which he looked on most of his humble companions was one of benevolence, slightly tinctured with contempt. He was at perfect ease in their company; he was grateful for their devoted attachment; and he loaded them with benefits. Their veneration for him appears to have exceeded that with which Johnson was regarded by Boswell, or Warburton by Hurd. It was not in the power of adulation to turn such a head, or deprave such a heart, as Addison's. But it must in candor be admitted that he contracted some of the faults which can scarcely be avoided by any person who is so unfortunate as to be the oracle of a small literary coterie.

One member of this little society was Eustace Budgell, a young Templar of some literature, and a distant relation of Addison. There was at this time no stain on the character of Budgell, and it is not improbable that his career would have been prosperous and honorable, if the life of his cousin had been prolonged. But, when the master was laid in the grave, the disciple broke loose from all restraint, descended rapidly from one degree of vice and misery to another, ruined his fortune by follies, attempted to repair it by crimes, and at length closed a wicked and unhappy life by self-murder. Yet, to the last, the wretched man, gambler, lampooner, cheat, forger, as he was, retained his affection and veneration for Addison,

and recorded those feelings in the last lines which he traced before he hid himself from infamy under London Bridge.

Another of Addison's favorite companions was Ambrose Philips, a good Whig and a middling poet, who had the honor of bringing into fashion a species of composition which has been called, after his name, Namby Pamby. But the most remarkable members of the little senate, as Pope long afterwards called it, were Richard Steele and Thomas Tickell.

Steele had known Addison from childhood. They had been together at the Charter House and at Oxford; but circumstances had then, for a time, separated them widely. Steele had left college without taking a degree, had been disinherited by a rich relation, had led a vagrant life, had served in the army, had tried to find the philosopher's stone, and had written a religious treatise and several comedies. He was one of those people whom it is impossible either to hate or to respect. His temper was sweet, his affections warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak. His life was spent in sinning and repenting; in inculcating what was right, and doing what was wrong. In speculation, he was a man of piety and honor; in practice he was much of the rake and a little of the swindler. He was, however, so good-natured that it was not easy to be seriously angry with him, and that even rigid

moralists felt more inclined to pity than to blame him, when he diced himself into a spunging-house or drank himself into a fever. Addison regarded Steele with kindness not unmingled with scorn, tried, with little success, to keep him out of scrapes, introduced him to the great, procured a good place for him, corrected his plays, and, though by no means rich, lent him large sums of money. One of these loans appears, from a letter dated in August, 1708, to have amounted to a thousand pounds. These pecuniary transactions probably led to frequent bickerings. It is said that, on one occasion, Steele's negligence, or dishonesty, provoked Addison to repay himself by the help of a bailiff. We cannot join with Miss Aikin in rejecting this story. Johnson heard it from Savage, who heard it from Steele. Few private transactions which took place a hundred and twenty years ago, are proved by stronger evidence than this. But we can by no means agree with those who condemn Addison's severity. The most amiable of mankind may well be moved to indignation, when what he has earned hardly, and lent with great inconvenience to himself, for the purpose of relieving a friend in distress, is squandered with insane profusion. We will illustrate our meaning by an example which is not the less striking because it is taken from fiction. Dr. Harrison, in Fielding's Amelia, is represented as the most benevolent of human beings; yet he

takes in execution, not only the goods, but the person of his friend Booth. Dr. Harrison resorts to this strong measure because he has been informed that Booth, while pleading poverty as an excuse for not paying just debts, has been buying fine jewellery, and setting up a coach. No person who is well acquainted with Steele's life and correspondence can doubt that he behaved quite as ill to Addison as Booth was accused of behaving to Dr. Harrison. The real history, we have little doubt, was something like this:—A letter comes to Addison, imploring help in pathetic terms, and promising reformation and speedy repayment. Poor Dick declares that he has not an inch of candle, or a bushel of coals, or credit with the butcher for a shoulder of mutton. Addison is moved. He determines to deny himself some medals which are wanting to his series of the Twelve Cæsars; to put off buying the new edition of Bayle's Dictionary; and to wear his old sword and buckles another year. In this way he manages to send a hundred pounds to his friend. The next day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of gentlemen and ladies assembled. The fiddles are playing. The table is groaning under champagne, burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats. Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused, should send sheriff's officers to reclaim what is due to him?

Tickell was a young man, fresh from Oxford,

who had introduced himself to public notice by writing a most ingenious and graceful little poem in praise of the opera of Rosamond. He deserved, and at length attained, the first place in Addison's friendship. For a time Steele and Tickell were on good terms. But they loved Addison too much to love each other, and at length became as bitter enemies as the rival bulls in Virgil.

At the close of 1708 Wharton became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and appointed Addison Chief Secretary. Addison was consequently under the necessity of quitting London for Dublin. Besides the chief secretaryship, which was then worth about two thousand pounds a year, he obtained a patent appointing him keeper of the Irish Records for life, with a salary of three or four hundred a year. Budgell accompanied his cousin in the capacity of private secretary.

Wharton and Addison had nothing in common but Whiggism. The Lord Lieutenant was not only licentious and corrupt, but was distinguished from other libertines and jobbers by a callous impudence which presented the strongest contrast to the Secretary's gentleness and delicacy. Many parts of the Irish administration at this time appear to have deserved serious blame. But against Addison there was not a murmur. He long afterwards asserted, what all the evidence which we have ever seen tends to prove, that his diligence and integrity gained the friend-

ship of all the most considerable persons in Ireland.

The parliamentary career of Addison in Ireland has, we think, wholly escaped the notice of all his biographers. He was elected member for the borough of Cavan in the summer of 1709; and in the journals of two sessions his name frequently occurs. Some of the entries appear to indicate that he so far overcame his timidity as to make speeches. Nor is this by any means improbable; for the Irish House of Commons was a far less formidable audience than the English House; and many tongues which were tied by fear in the greater assembly became fluent in the smaller. Gerard Hamilton, for example, who, from fear of losing the fame gained by his single speech, sat mute at Westminster during forty years, spoke with great effect at Dublin when he was secretary to Lord Halifax.

While Addison was in Ireland, an event occurred to which he owes his high and permanent rank among British writers. As yet his fame rested on performances which, though highly respectable, were not built for duration, and which would, if he had produced nothing else, have now been almost forgotten; on some excellent Latin verses; on some English verses which occasionally rose above mediocrity; and on a book of travels, agreeably written, but not indicating any extraordinary powers of mind. These works showed him to be a

man of taste, sense, and learning. The time had come when he was to prove himself a man of genius, and to enrich our literature with compositions which will live as long as the English language.

In the spring of 1709 Steele formed a literary project, of which he was far indeed from foreseeing the consequences. Periodical papers had during many years been published in London. Most of these were political; but in some of them questions of morality, taste, and love-casuistry had been discussed. The literary merit of these works was small indeed; and even their names are now known only to the curious.

Steele had been appointed Gazetteer by Sunderland, at the request, it is said, of Addison, and thus had access to foreign intelligence earlier and more authentic than was in those times within the reach of an ordinary news-writer. This circumstance seems to have suggested to him the scheme of publishing a periodical paper on a new plan. It was to appear on the days on which the post left London for the country, which were, in that generation, the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It was to contain the foreign news, accounts of theatrical representations, and the literary gossip of Will's and of the Grecian. It was also to contain remarks on the fashionable topics of the day, compliments to beauties, pasquinades on noted sharpers, and criticisms on popular preachers.

The aim of Steele does not appear to have been at first higher than this. He was not ill-qualified to conduct the work which he had planned. His public intelligence he drew from the best sources. He knew the town, and had paid dear for his knowledge. He had read much more than the dissipated men of that time were in the habit of reading. He was a rake among scholars, and a scholar among rakes. His style was easy and not incorrect; and though his wit and humor were of no high order, his gay animal spirits imparted to his compositions an air of vivacity which ordinary readers could hardly distinguish from comic genius. His writings have been well compared to those light wines which, though deficient in body and flavor, are yet a pleasant small drink, if not kept too long, or carried too far.

Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was an imaginary person, almost as well known in that age as Mr. Paul Pry or Mr. Samuel Pickwick in ours. Swift had assumed the name of Bickerstaff in a satirical pamphlet against Partridge, the maker of almanacs. Partridge had been fool enough to publish a furious reply. Bickerstaff had rejoined in a second pamphlet still more diverting than the first. All the wits had combined to keep up the joke, and the town was long in convulsions of laughter. Steele determined to employ the name which this controversy had made popular; and in April, 1709, it was

announced that Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was about to publish a paper called the *Tatler*.

Addison had not been consulted about this scheme; but as soon as he heard of it he determined to give his assistance. The effect of that assistance cannot be better described than in Steele's own words. "I fared," he said, "like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbor to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." "The paper," he says elsewhere, "was advanced indeed. It was raised to a greater thing than I intended it."

It is probable that Addison, when he sent across St. George's Channel his first contributions to the *Tatler*, had no notion of the extent and variety of his own powers. He was the possessor of a vast mine, rich with a hundred ores. But he had been acquainted only with the least precious part of his treasures, and had hitherto contented himself with producing sometimes copper and sometimes lead, intermingled with a little silver. All at once, and by mere accident, he had lighted on an inexhaustible vein of the finest gold.

The mere choice and arrangement of his words would have sufficed to make his essays classical. For never, not even by Dryden, not even by Temple, had the English language been written with such sweetness, grace, and facility. But this was the smallest part of Addison's praise. Had he clothed

his thoughts in the half French style of Horace Walpole, or in the half Latin style of Dr. Johnson, or in the half German jargon of the present day, his genius would have triumphed over all faults of manner. As a moral satirist he stands unrivalled. If ever the best *Tatlers* and *Spectators* were equalled in their own kind, we should be inclined to guess that it must have been by the lost comedies of Menander.

In wit, properly so called, Addison was not inferior to Cowley or Butler. No single ode of Cowley contains so many happy analogies as are crowded into the lines to Sir Godfrey Kneller; and we would undertake to collect from the *Spectators* as great a number of ingenious illustrations as can be found in Hudibras. The still higher faculty of invention Addison possessed in still larger measure. The numerous fictions, generally original, often wild and grotesque, but always singularly graceful and happy, which are found in his essays, fully entitle him to the rank of a great poet, a rank to which his metrical compositions give him no claim. As an observer of life, of manners, of all the shades of human character, he stands in the first class. And what he observed he had the art of communicating in two widely different ways. He could describe virtues, vices, habits, whims as well as Clarendon. But he could do something better. He could call human beings into existence, and make them exhibit themselves. If we

wish to find anything more vivid than Addison's best portraits, we must go either to Shakespeare or to Cervantes.

But what shall we say of Addison's humor, of his sense of the ludicrous, of his power of awakening that sense in others, and of drawing mirth from incidents which occur every day, and from little peculiarities of temper and manner, such as may be found in every man? We feel the charm: we give ourselves up to it; but we strive in vain to analyze it.

Perhaps the best way of describing Addison's peculiar pleasantry is to compare it with the pleasantry of some other great satirists. The three most eminent masters of the art of ridicule during the eighteenth century, were, we conceive, Addison, Swift, and Voltaire. Which of the three had the greatest power of moving laughter may be questioned. But each of them, within his own domain, was supreme.

Voltaire is the prince of buffoons. His merriment is without disguise or restraint. He gambols; he grins; he shakes his sides; he points the finger; he turns up the nose; he shoots out the tongue. The manner of Swift is the very opposite to this. He moves laughter, but never joins in it. He appears in his works such as he appeared in society. All the company are convulsed with merriment, while the Dean, the author of all the mirth, preserves an invincible gravity, and even

sourness of aspect, and gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies, with the air of a man reading the commination service.

The manner of Addison is as remote from that of Swift as from that of Voltaire. He neither laughs out like the French wit, nor, like the Irish wit, throws a double portion of severity into his countenance while laughing inwardly; but preserves a look peculiarly his own, a look of demure serenity, disturbed only by an arch sparkle of the eye, an almost imperceptible elevation of the brow, an almost imperceptible curl of the lip. His tone is never that either of a Jack Pudding or of a cynic. It is that of a gentleman, in whom the quickest sense of the ridiculous is constantly tempered by good nature and good breeding.

We own that the humor of Addison is, in our opinion, of a more delicious flavor than the humor of either Swift or Voltaire. Thus much, at least, is certain, that both Swift and Voltaire have been successfully mimicked, and that no man has yet been able to mimic Addison. The letter of the Abbé Coyer to Pansophe is Voltaire all over, and imposed, during a long time, on the Academicians of Paris. There are passages in Arbuthnot's satirical works which we, at least, cannot distinguish from Swift's best writing. But of the many eminent men who have made Addison their model, though several have copied his mere diction with happy effect, none have been able to catch

the tone of his pleasantry. In the *World*, in the *Connoisseur*, in the *Mirror*, in the *Lounger*, there are numerous papers written in obvious imitation of his *Tatlers* and *Spectators*. Most of these papers have some merit; many are very lively and amusing; but there is not a single one which could be passed off as Addison's on a critic of the smallest perspicacity.

But that which chiefly distinguishes Addison from Swift, from Voltaire, from almost all the other great masters of ridicule, is the grace, the nobleness, the moral purity, which we find even in his merriment. Severity, gradually hardening and darkening into misanthropy, characterizes the works of Swift. The nature of Voltaire was, indeed, not inhuman; but he venerated nothing. Neither in the masterpieces of art nor in the purest examples of virtue, neither in the Great First Cause nor in the awful enigma of the grave, could he see anything but subjects for drollery. The more solemn and august the theme, the more monkey-like was his grimacing and chattering. The mirth of Swift is the mirth of Mephistopheles; the mirth of Voltaire is the mirth of Puck. If, as Soame Jenyns oddly imagined, a portion of the happiness of seraphim and just men made perfect be derived from an exquisite perception of the ludicrous, their mirth must surely be none other than the mirth of Addison; a mirth consistent with tender compassion for all that is frail, and

with profound reverence for all that is sublime. Nothing great, nothing amiable, no moral duty, no doctrine of natural or revealed religion, has ever been associated by Addison with any degrading idea. His humanity is without a parallel in literary history. The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it. No kind of power is more formidable than the power of making men ridiculous; and that power Addison possessed in boundless measure. How grossly that power was abused by Swift and by Voltaire is well known. But of Addison it may be confidently affirmed that he has blackened no man's character, nay, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in all the volumes which he has left us a single taunt which can be called ungenerous or unkind. Yet he had detractors, whose malignity might have seemed to justify as terrible a revenge as that which men, not superior to him in genius, wreaked on Bettesworth and on Franc de Pompignan. He was a politician; he was the best writer of his party; he lived in times of fierce excitement, in times when persons of high character and station stooped to scurrility such as is now practised only by the basest of mankind. Yet no provocation and no example could induce him to return railing for railing.

Of the service which his Essays rendered to morality it is difficult to speak too highly. It is true, that, when the *Tatler* appeared, that age of

outrageous profaneness and licentiousness which followed the Restoration had passed away. Jeremy Collier had shamed the theatres into something which, compared with the excesses of Etherege and Wycherley, might be called decency. Yet there still lingered in the public mind a pernicious notion that there was some connection between genius and profligacy; between the domestic virtues and the sullen formality of the Puritans. That error it is the glory of Addison to have dispelled. He taught the nation that the faith and the morality of Hale and Tillotson might be found in company with wit more sparkling than the wit of Congreve, and with humor richer than the humor of Vanbrugh. So effectually, indeed, did he retort on vice the mockery which had recently been directed against virtue, that, since his time, the open violation of decency has always been considered among us as the mark of a fool. And this revolution, the greatest and most salutary ever effected by any satirist, he accomplished, be it remembered, without writing one personal lampoon.

In the early contributions of Addison to the *Tatler*, his peculiar powers were not fully exhibited. Yet from the first, his superiority to all his coadjutors was evident. Some of his later *Tatlers* are fully equal to anything that he ever wrote. Among the portraits, we most admire Tom Folio, Ned Softly, and the Political Uphol

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sterer. The proceedings of the Court of Honor, the Thermometer of Zeal, the story of the Frozen Words, the Memoirs of the Shilling, are excellent specimens of that ingenious and lively species of fiction in which Addison excelled all men. There is one still better paper of the same class. But though that paper, a hundred and thirty-three years ago, was probably thought as edifying as one of Smalridge's sermons, we dare not indicate it to the squeamish readers of the nineteenth century.

During the session of Parliament which commenced in November, 1709, and which the impeachment of Sacheverell has made memorable, Addison appears to have resided in London. The *Tatler* was now more popular than any periodical paper had ever been; and his connection with it was generally known. It was not known, however, that almost everything good in the *Tatler* was his. The truth is, that the fifty or sixty numbers which we owe to him were not merely the best, but so decidedly the best that any five of them are more valuable than all the two hundred numbers in which he had no share.

He required, at this time, all the solace which he could derive from literary success. The Queen had always disliked the Whigs. She had during some years disliked the Marlborough family. But, reigning by a disputed title, she could not venture directly to oppose herself to a majority of both Houses of Parliament; and, engaged as she was in

a war on the event of which her own crown was staked, she could not venture to disgrace a great and successful general. But at length, in the year 1710, the causes which had restrained her from showing her aversion to the Low Church party ceased to operate. The trial of Sacheverell produced an outbreak of public feeling scarcely less violent than the outbreaks which we can ourselves remember in 1820, and in 1831. The country gentlemen, the country clergymen, the rabble of the towns, were all, for once, on the same side. It was clear that, if a general election took place before the excitement abated, the Tories would have a majority. The services of Marlborough had been so splendid that they were no longer necessary. The Queen's throne was secure from all attack on the part of Louis. Indeed, it seemed much more likely that the English and German armies would divide the spoils of Versailles and Marli than that a Marshal of France would bring back the Pretender to St. James's. The Queen, acting by the advice of Harley, determined to dismiss her servants. In June the change commenced. Sunderland was the first who fell. The Tories exulted over his fall. The Whigs tried, during a few weeks, to persuade themselves that her majesty had acted only from personal dislike to the Secretary, and that she meditated no further alteration. But, early in August, Godolphin was surprised by a letter from Anne, which directed

him to break his white staff. Even after this event, the irresolution or dissimulation of Harley kept up the hopes of the Whigs during another month; and then the ruin became rapid and violent. The Parliament was dissolved. The ministers were turned out. The Tories were called to office. The tide of popularity ran violently in favor of the High Church party. That party, feeble in the late House of Commons, was now irresistible. The power which the Tories had thus suddenly acquired, they used with blind and stupid ferocity. The howl which the whole pack set up for prey and for blood appalled even him who had roused and unchained them. When, at this distance of time, we calmly review the conduct of the discarded ministers, we cannot but feel a movement of indignation at the injustice with which they were treated. No body of men had ever administered the government with more energy, ability, and moderation; and their success had been proportioned to their wisdom. They had saved Holland and Germany. They had humbled France. They had, as it seemed, all but torn Spain from the house of Bourbon. They had made England the first power in Europe. At home they had united England and Scotland. They had respected the rights of conscience and the liberty of the subject. They retired, leaving their country at the height of prosperity and glory. And yet they were pursued to their retreat

by such a roar of obloquy as was never raised against the government which threw away thirteen colonies, or against the government which sent a gallant army to perish in the ditches of Walcheren.

None of the Whigs suffered more in the general wreck than Addison. He had just sustained some heavy pecuniary losses, of the nature of which we are imperfectly informed, when his secretaryship was taken from him. He had reason to believe that he should also be deprived of the small Irish office which he held by patent. He had just resigned his fellowship. It seems probable that he had already ventured to raise his eyes to a great lady, and that, while his political friends were in power, and while his own fortunes were rising, he had been, in the phrase of the romances which were then fashionable, permitted to hope. But Mr. Addison the ingenious writer, and Mr. Addison the chief secretary, were, in her ladyship's opinion, two very different persons. All these calamities united, however, could not disturb the serene cheerfulness of a mind conscious of innocence, and rich in its own wealth. He told his friends, with smiling resignation, that they ought to admire his philosophy; that he had lost at once his fortune, his place, his fellowship, and his mistress; that he must think of turning tutor again; and yet that his spirits were as good as ever.

He had one consolation. Of the unpopularity which his friends had incurred, he had no share.

Such was the esteem with which he was regarded that, while the most violent measures were taken for the purpose of forcing Tory members on Whig corporations, he was returned to Parliament without even a contest. Swift, who was now in London, and who had already determined on quitting the Whigs, wrote to Stella in these remarkable words: "The Tories carry it among the new members six to one. Mr. Addison's election has passed easy and undisputed; and I believe if he had a mind to be king he would hardly be refused."

The good will with which the Tories regarded Addison is the more honorable to him, because it had not been purchased by any concession on his part. During the general election he published a political journal, entitled the *Whig Examiner*. Of that journal it may be sufficient to say that Johnson, in spite of his strong political prejudices, pronounced it to be superior in wit to any of Swift's writings on the other side. When it ceased to appear, Swift, in a letter to Stella, expressed his exultation at the death of so formidable an antagonist. "He might well rejoice," says Johnson, "at the death of that which he could not have killed." "On no occasion," he adds, "was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his powers more evidently appear."

The only use which Addison appears to have

made of the favor with which he was regarded by the Tories was to save some of his friends from the general ruin of the Whig party. He felt himself to be in a situation which made it his duty to take a decided part in politics. But the case of Steele and of Ambrose Philips was different. For Philips, Addison even condescended to solicit, with what success we have not ascertained. Steele held two places. He was Gazetteer, and he was also a Commissioner of Stamps. The Gazette was taken from him. But he was suffered to retain his place in the Stamp Office, on an implied understanding that he should not be active against the new government; and he was, during more than two years, induced by Addison to observe this armistice with tolerable fidelity.

Isaac Bickerstaff accordingly became silent upon politics, and the article of news which had once formed about one-third of his paper, altogether disappeared. The *Tatler* had completely changed its character. It was now nothing but a series of essays on books, morals, and manners. Steele therefore resolved to bring it to a close, and to commence a new work on an improved plan. It was announced that this new work would be published daily. The undertaking was generally regarded as bold, or rather rash; but the event amply justified the confidence with which Steele relied on the fertility of Addison's genius. On the second of January, 1711, appeared the last

Tatler. At the beginning of March following appeared the first of an incomparable series of papers, containing observations on life and literature by an imaginary spectator.

The Spectator himself was conceived and drawn by Addison; and it is not easy to doubt that the portrait was meant to be in some features a likeness of the painter. The Spectator is a gentleman who, after passing a studious youth at the university, has travelled on classic ground, and has bestowed much attention on curious points of antiquity. He has, on his return, fixed his residence in London, and has observed all the forms of life which are to be found in that great city; has daily listened to the wits of Will's, has smoked with the philosophers of the Grecian, and has mingled with the parsons at Child's, and with the politicians at the St. James's. In the morning, he often listens to the hum of the Exchange; in the evening, his face is constantly to be seen in the pit of Drury Lane Theatre. But an insurmountable bashfulness prevents him from opening his mouth except in a small circle of intimate friends.

These friends were first sketched by Steele. Four of the club, the templar, the clergyman, the soldier, and the merchant, were uninteresting figures, fit only for a background. But the other two, an old country baronet and an old town rake, though not delineated with a very delicate pencil, had some good strokes. Addison took the rude

outlines into his own hands, retouched them, colored them, and is in truth the creator of the Sir Roger de Coverley and the Will Honeycomb with whom we are all familiar.

The plan of the Spectator must be allowed to be both original and eminently happy. Every valuable essay in the series may be read with pleasure separately; yet the five or six hundred essays form a whole, and a whole which has the interest of a novel. It must be remembered, too, that at that time no novel, giving a lively and powerful picture of the common life and manners of England, had appeared. Richardson was working as a compositor. Fielding was robbing birds' nests. Smollett was not yet born. The narrative, therefore, which connects together the Spectator's essays, gave to our ancestors their first taste of an exquisite and untried pleasure. That narrative was indeed constructed with no art or labor. The events were such events as occur every day. Sir Roger comes up to town to see Eugenio, as the worthy baronet always calls Prince Eugene, goes with the Spectator on the water to Spring Gardens, walks among the tombs in the Abbey, and is frightened by the Mohawks, but conquers his apprehension so far as to go to the theatre when the Distressed Mother is acted. The Spectator pays a visit in the summer to Coverley Hall, is charmed with the old house, the old butler, and the old chaplain, eats a jack caught by Will Wimble, rides to the assizes, and

hears a point of law discussed by Tom Touchy. At last a letter from the honest butler brings to the club the news that Sir Roger is dead. Will Honeycomb marries and reforms at sixty. The club breaks up; and the Spectator resigns his functions. Such events can hardly be said to form a plot; yet they are related with such truth, such grace, such wit, such humor, such pathos, such knowledge of the human heart, such knowledge of the ways of the world, that they charm us on the hundredth perusal. We have not the least doubt that if Addison had written a novel, on an extensive plan, it would have been superior to any that we possess. As it is, he is entitled to be considered not only as the greatest of the English essayists, but as the forerunner of the great English novelists.

We say this of Addison alone; for Addison is the Spectator. About three-sevenths of the work are his; and it is no exaggeration to say, that his worst essay is as good as the best essay of any of his coadjutors. His best essays approach near to absolute perfection; nor is their excellence more wonderful than their variety. His invention never seems to flag; nor is he ever under the necessity of repeating himself, or of wearing out a subject. There are no dregs in his wine. He regales us after the fashion of that prodigal nabob who held that there was only one good glass in a bottle. As soon as we have tasted the first sparkling foam of

a jest, it is withdrawn, and a fresh draught of nectar is at our lips. On the Monday, we have an allegory as lively and ingenious as Lucian's Auction of Lives; on the Tuesday, an Eastern apologue as richly colored as the Tales of Scheherezade; on the Wednesday, a character described with the skill of La Bruyère; on the Thursday, a scene from common life, equal to the best chapters in the Vicar of Wakefield; on the Friday, some sly Horatian pleasantry on fashionable follies,—on hoops, patches, or puppet-shows; and on the Saturday, a religious meditation, which will bear a comparison with the finest passages in Massillon.

It is dangerous to select where there is so much that deserves the highest praise. We will venture, however, to say, that any person who wishes to form a just notion of the extent and variety of Addison's powers, will do well to read at one sitting the following papers: The two Visits to the Abbey, the visit to the Exchange, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Vision of Mirza, the Transmigrations of Pug the Monkey, and the Death of Sir Roger de Coverley.

The least valuable of Addison's contributions to the *Spectator* are, in the judgment of our age, his critical papers. Yet his critical papers are always luminous, and often ingenious. The very worst of them must be regarded as creditable to him, when the character of the school in which he had been trained is fairly considered. The best of

them were much too good for his readers. In truth, he was not so far behind our generation as he was before his own. No essays in the *Spectator* were more censured and derided than those in which he raised his voice against the contempt with which our fine old ballads were regarded, and showed the scoffers that the same gold which, burnished and polished, gives lustre to the Æneid and the Odes of Horace, is mingled with the rude dross of Chevy Chase.

It is not strange that the success of the *Spectator* should have been such as no similar work has ever obtained. The number of copies daily distributed was at first three thousand. It subsequently increased, and had risen to near four thousand when the stamp tax was imposed. That tax was fatal to a crowd of journals. The *Spectator*, however, stood its ground, doubled its price, and, though its circulation fell off, still yielded a large revenue both to the state and to the authors. For particular papers, the demand was immense; of some, it is said, twenty thousand copies were required. But this was not all. To have the *Spectator* served up every morning with the bohea and rolls was a luxury for the few. The majority were content to wait till essays enough had appeared to form a volume. Ten thousand copies of each volume were immediately taken off, and new editions were called for. It must be remembered, that the population of England was then

hardly a third of what it now is. The number of Englishmen who were in the habit of reading, was probably not a sixth of what it now is. A shopkeeper or a farmer who found any pleasure in literature, was a rarity. Nay, there was doubtless more than one knight of the shire whose country seat did not contain ten books, receipt-books and books on farriery included. In these circumstances, the sale of the *Spectator* must be considered as indicating a popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens in our own time.

At the close of 1712 the *Spectator* ceased to appear. It was probably felt that the shortfaced gentleman and his club had been long enough before the town; and that it was time to withdraw them, and to replace them by a new set of characters. In a few weeks the first number of the *Guardian* was published. But the *Guardian* was unfortunate both in its birth and in its death. It began in dulness and disappeared in a tempest of faction. The original plan was bad. Addison contributed nothing till sixty-six numbers had appeared; and it was then impossible to make the *Guardian* what the *Spectator* had been. Nestor Ironside and the Miss Lizards were people to whom even he could impart no interest. He could only furnish some excellent little essays, both serious and comic; and this he did.

Why Addison gave no assistance to the *Guard-*

ian during the first two months of its existence, is a question which has puzzled the editors and biographers, but which seems to us to admit of a very easy solution. He was then engaged in bringing his Cato on the stage.

The first four acts of this drama had been lying in his desk since his return from Italy. His modest and sensitive nature shrank from the risk of a public and shameful failure; and, though all who saw the manuscript were loud in praise, some thought it possible that an audience might become impatient even of very good rhetoric, and advised Addison to print the play without hazarding a representation. At length, after many fits of apprehension, the poet yielded to the urgency of his political friends, who hoped that the public would discover some analogy between the followers of Cæsar and the Tories, between Sempronius and the apostate Whigs, between Cato, struggling to the last for the liberties of Rome, and the band of patriots who still stood firm round Halifax and Wharton.

Addison gave the play to the managers of Drury Lane Theatre, without stipulating for any advantage to himself. They, therefore, thought themselves bound to spare no cost in scenery and dresses. The decorations, it is true, would not have pleased the skilful eye of Mr. Macready. Juba's waistcoat blazed with gold lace; Marcia's hoop was worthy of a duchess on the birthday; and

Cato wore a wig worth fifty guineas. The prologue was written by Pope, and is undoubtedly a dignified and spirited composition. The part of the hero was excellently played by Booth. Steele undertook to pack a house. The boxes were in a blaze with the stars of the Peers in Opposition. The pit was crowded with attentive and friendly listeners from the Inns of Court and the literary coffee-houses. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Governor of the Bank of England, was at the head of a powerful body of auxiliaries from the city, warm men and true Whigs, but better known at Jonathan's and Garraway's than in the haunts of wits and critics.

These precautions were quite superfluous. The Tories, as a body, regarded Addison with no unkind feelings. Nor was it for their interest, professing, as they did, profound reverence for law and prescription, and abhorrence both of popular insurrections and of standing armies, to appropriate to themselves reflections thrown on the great military chief and demagogue, who, with the support of the legions and of the common people, subverted all the ancient institutions of his country. Accordingly, every shout that was raised by the members of the Kit Cat was echoed by the High Churchmen of the October; and the curtain at length fell amidst thunders of unanimous applause.

The delight and admiration of the town were

described by the *Guardian* in terms which we might attribute to partiality, were it not that the *Examiner*, the organ of the ministry, held similar language. The Tories, indeed, found much to sneer at in the conduct of their opponents. Steele had on this, as on other occasions, shown more zeal than taste or judgment. The honest citizens who marched under the orders of Sir Gibby, as he was facetiously called, probably knew better when to buy and when to sell stock than when to clap and when to hiss at a play, and incurred some ridicule by making the hypocritical Sempronius their favorite, and by giving to his insincere rants louder plaudits than they bestowed on the temperate eloquence of Cato. Wharton, too, who had the incredible effrontery to applaud the lines about flying from prosperous vice and from the power of impious men to a private station, did not escape the sarcasms of those who justly thought that he could fly from nothing more vicious or impious than himself. The epilogue, which was written by Garth, a zealous Whig, was severely and not unreasonably censured as ignoble and out of place. But Addison was described, even by the bitterest Tory writers, as a gentleman of wit and virtue, in whose friendship many persons of both parties were happy, and whose name ought not to be mixed up with factious squabbles.

Of the jests by which the triumph of the Whig party was disturbed, the most severe and happy

was Bolingbroke's. Between two acts he sent for Booth to his box, and presented him, before the whole theatre, with a purse of fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual Dictator. This was a pungent allusion to the attempt which Marlborough had made, not long before his fall, to obtain a patent creating him Captain General for life.

It was April; and in April, a hundred and thirty years ago, the London season was thought to be far advanced. During a whole month, however, Cato was performed to overflowing houses, and brought into the treasury of the theatre twice the gains of an ordinary spring. In the summer the Drury Lane company went down to the Act at Oxford, and there, before an audience which retained an affectionate remembrance of Addison's accomplishments and virtues, his tragedy was enacted during several days. The gownsmen began to besiege the theatre in the forenoon, and by one in the afternoon all the seats were filled.

About the merits of the piece which had so extraordinary an effect, the public, we suppose, has made up its mind. To compare it with the masterpieces of the Attic stage, with the great English dramas of the time of Elizabeth, or even with the productions of Schiller's manhood, would be absurd indeed; yet it contains excellent dialogue and declamation, and, among plays fashioned on the French model, must be allowed to rank

high,—not indeed with Athalie or Saul, but, we think, not below Cinna, and certainly above any other English tragedy of the same school; above many of the plays of Corneille; above many of the plays of Voltaire and Alfieri; and above some plays of Racine. Be this as it may, we have little doubt that Cato did as much as the *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, and *Freeholders* united, to raise Addison's fame among his contemporaries.

The modesty and good nature of the successful dramatist had tamed even the malignity of faction. But literary envy, it should seem, is a fiercer passion than party spirit. It was by a zealous Whig that the fiercest attack on the Whig tragedy was made. John Dennis published Remarks on Cato, which were written with some acuteness and with much coarseness and asperity. Addison neither defended himself nor retaliated. On many points he had an excellent defence, and nothing would have been easier than to retaliate; for Dennis had written bad odes, bad tragedies, bad comedies: he had, moreover, a larger share than most men of those infirmities and eccentricities which excite laughter; and Addison's power of turning either an absurd book or an absurd man into ridicule was unrivalled. Addison, however, serenely conscious of his superiority, looked with pity on his assailant, whose temper, naturally irritable and gloomy, had been soured by want, by controversy, and by literary failures.

But among the young candidates for Addison's favor there was one distinguished by talents from the rest, and distinguished, we fear, not less by malignity and insincerity. Pope was only twenty-five. But his powers had expanded to their full maturity; and his best poem, the Rape of the Lock, had recently been published. Of his genius Addison had always expressed high admiration. But Addison had early discerned, what might, indeed, have been discerned by an eye less penetrating than his, that the diminutive, crooked, sickly boy was eager to revenge himself on society for the unkindness of nature. In the *Spectator* the Essay on Criticism had been praised with cordial warmth; but a gentle hint had been added that the writer of so excellent a poem would have done well to avoid ill-natured personalities Pope, though evidently more galled by the censure than gratified by the praise, returned thanks for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. The two writers continued to exchange civilities, counsel, and small good offices. Addison publicly extolled Pope's miscellaneous pieces, and Pope furnished Addison with a prologue. This did not last long. Pope hated Dennis, whom he had injured without provocation. The appearance of the Remarks on Cato gave the irritable poet an opportunity of venting his malice under the show of friendship; and such an opportunity could not but be welcome to a nature which was implacable

in enmity, and which always preferred the tortuous to the straight path. He published, accordingly, the Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis. But Pope had mistaken his powers. He was a great master of invective and sarcasm; he could dissect a character in terse and sonorous couplets, brilliant with antithesis; but of dramatic talent he was altogether destitute. If he had written a lampoon on Dennis, such as that on Atticus or that on Sporus, the old grumbler would have been crushed. But Pope writing dialogue resembled—to borrow Horace's imagery and his own—a wolf, which, instead of biting, should take to kicking, or a monkey which should try to sting. The Narrative is utterly contemptible. Of argument there is not even the show, and the jests are such as, if they were introduced into a farce, would call forth the hisses of the shilling gallery. Dennis raves about the drama, and the nurse thinks that he is calling for a dram. "There is," he cries, "no peripetia in the tragedy, no change of fortune, no change at all." "Pray, good sir, be not angry," says the old woman, "I'll fetch change." This is not exactly the pleasantry of Addison.

There can be no doubt that Addison saw through this officious zeal, and felt himself deeply aggrieved by it. So foolish and spiteful a pamphlet could do him no good, and, if he were thought to have any hand in it, must do him harm. Gifted with incomparable powers of ridicule, he had never,

even in self-defence, used those powers inhumanly or uncourteously; and he was not disposed to let others make his fame and his interests a pretext under which they might commit outrages from which he had himself constantly abstained. He accordingly declared that he had no concern in the Narrative, that he disapproved of it, and that if he answered the Remarks, he would answer them like a gentleman; and he took care to communicate this to Dennis. Pope was bitterly mortified, and to this transaction we are inclined to ascribe the hatred with which he ever after regarded Addison.

In September, 1713, the *Guardian* ceased to appear. Steele had gone mad about politics. A general election had just taken place: he had been chosen member for Stockbridge, and he fully expected to play a first part in Parliament. The immense success of the *Tatler* and *Spectator* had turned his head. He had been the editor of both those papers, and was not aware how entirely they owed their influence and popularity to the genius of his friend. His spirits, always violent, were now excited by vanity, ambition, and faction, to such a pitch that he every day committed some offence against good sense and good taste. All the discreet and moderate members of his own party regretted and condemned his folly. "I am in a thousand troubles," Addison wrote, "about poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous to himself. But he has sent me word

that he is determined to go on, and that any advice I may give him in this particular will have no weight with him."

Steele set up a political paper called the *Englishman*, which, as it was not supported by contributions from Addison, completely failed. By this work, by some other writings of the same kind, and by the airs which he gave himself at the first meeting of the new Parliament, he made the Tories so angry that they determined to expel him. The Whigs stood by him gallantly, but were unable to save him. The vote of expulsion was regarded by all dispassionate men as a tyrannical exercise of the power of the majority. But Steele's violence and folly, though they by no means justified the steps which his enemies took, had completely disgusted his friends; nor did he ever regain the place which he had held in the public estimation.

Addison about this time conceived the design of adding an eighth volume to the *Spectator*. In June, 1714, the first number of the new series appeared, and during about six months three papers were published weekly. Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the *Englishman* and the eighth volume of the *Spectator*, between Steele without Addison and Addison without Steele. The *Englishman* is forgotten: the eighth volume of the *Spectator* contains, perhaps, the finest essays, both serious and playful, in the English language.

Before this volume was completed, the death of Anne produced an entire change in the administration of public affairs. The blow fell suddenly. It found the Tory party distracted by internal feuds, and unprepared for any great effort. Harley had just been disgraced. Bolingbroke, it was supposed, would be the chief minister. But the Queen was on her death-bed before the white staff had been given, and her last public act was to deliver it with a feeble hand to the Duke of Shrewsbury. The emergency produced a coalition between all sections of public men who were attached to the Protestant succession. George the First was proclaimed without opposition. A council, in which the leading whigs had seats, took the direction of affairs till the new King should arrive. The first act of the Lords Justices was to appoint Addison their secretary.

There is an idle tradition that he was directed to prepare a letter to the King, that he could not satisfy himself as to the style of this composition, and that the Lords Justices called in a clerk, who at once did what was wanted. It is not strange that a story so flattering to mediocrity should be popular; and we are sorry to deprive dunces of their consolation. But the truth must be told. It was well observed by Sir James Mackintosh, whose knowledge of these times was unequalled, that Addison never, in any official document, affected wit or eloquence, and that his despatches

are, without exception, remarkable for unpretending simplicity. Everybody who knows with what ease Addison's finest essays were produced, must be convinced that, if well-turned phrases had been wanted, he would have had no difficulty in finding them. We are, however, inclined to believe, that the story is not absolutely without a foundation. It may well be that Addison did not know, till he had consulted experienced clerks who remembered the times when William the Third was absent on the Continent, in what form a letter from the Council of Regency to the King ought to be drawn. We think it very likely that the ablest statesmen of our time, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, for example, would, in similar circumstances, be found quite as ignorant. Every office has some little mysteries which the dullest man may learn with a little attention, and which the greatest man cannot possibly know by intuition. One paper must be signed by the chief of the department; another by his deputy; to a third the royal sign-manual is necessary. One communication is to be registered, and another is not. One sentence must be in black ink, and another in red ink. If the ablest Secretary for Ireland were moved to the India Board, if the ablest President of the India Board were moved to the War Office, he would require instruction on points like these; and we do not doubt that Addison required such instruction when he be-

came, for the first time, Secretary to the Lords Justices.

George the First took possession of his kingdom without opposition. A new ministry was formed, and a new Parliament favorable to the Whigs chosen. Sunderland was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and Addison again went to Dublin as Chief Secretary.

At Dublin Swift resided; and there was much speculation about the way in which the Dean and the Secretary would behave towards each other. The relations which existed between these remarkable men form an interesting and pleasing portion of literary history. They had early attached themselves to the same political party and to the same patrons. While Anne's Whig ministry was in power, the visits of Swift to London and the official residence of Addison in Ireland had given them opportunities of knowing each other. They were the two shrewdest observers of their age. But their observations on each other had led them to favorable conclusions. Swift did full justice to the rare powers of conversation which were latent under the bashful deportment of Addison. Addison, on the other hand, discerned much good nature under the severe look and manner of Swift; and, indeed, the Swift of 1708 and the Swift of 1738 were two very different men.

But the paths of the two friends diverged widely. The Whig statesmen loaded Addison

with solid benefits. They praised Swift, asked him to dinner, and did nothing more for him. His profession laid them under a difficulty. In the state they could not promote him; and they had reason to fear that, by bestowing preferment in the church on the author of the Tale of a Tub, they might give scandal to the public, which had no high opinion of their orthodoxy. He did not make fair allowance for the difficulties which prevented Halifax and Somers from serving him, thought himself an ill-used man, sacrificed honor and consistency to revenge, joined the Tories, and became their most formidable champion. He soon found, however, that his old friends were less to blame than he had supposed. The dislike with which the Queen and the heads of the church regarded him was insurmountable; and it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained an ecclesiastical dignity of no great value, on condition of fixing his residence in a country which he detested.

Difference of political opinion had produced, not indeed a quarrel, but a coolness between Swift and Addison. They at length ceased altogether to see each other. Yet there was between them a tacit compact like that between the hereditary guests in the Iliad:—

> Ἔγχεα δ' ἀλλήλων ἀλεώμεθα καὶ δι' ὁμίλου·
> Πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ Τρῶες κλειτοί τ' ἐπίκουροι,
> Κτείνειν, ὃν κε θεός γε πόρῃ καὶ ποσσὶ κιχείω,
> Πολλοὶ δ' αὖ σοὶ Ἀχαιοί, ἐναιρέμεν ὃν κε δύνῃαι.

It is not strange that Addison, who calumniated and insulted nobody, should not have calumniated or insulted Swift. But it is remarkable that Swift, to whom neither genius nor virtue was sacred, and who generally seemed to find, like most other renegades, a peculiar pleasure in attacking old friends, should have shown so much respect and tenderness to Addison.

Fortune had now changed. The accession of the house of Hanover had secured in England the liberties of the people, and in Ireland the dominion of the Protestant caste. To that caste Swift was more odious than any other man. He was hooted and even pelted in the streets of Dublin; and could not venture to ride along the strand for his health without the attendance of armed servants. Many whom he had formerly served now libelled and insulted him. At this time Addison arrived. He had been advised not to show the smallest civility to the Dean of St. Patrick's. He had answered, with admirable spirit, that it might be necessary for men whose fidelity to their party was suspected, to hold no intercourse with political opponents; but that one who had been a steady Whig in the worst times might venture, when the good cause was triumphant, to shake hands with an old friend who was one of the vanquished Tories. His kindness was soothing to the proud and cruelly wounded spirit of Swift; and the two great satirists resumed their habits of friendly intercourse.

Those associates of Addison whose political opinions agreed with his shared his good fortune. He took Tickell with him to Ireland. He procured for Budgell a lucrative place in the same kingdom. Ambrose Philips was provided for in England. Steele had injured himself so much by his eccentricity and perverseness, that he obtained but a very small part of what he thought his due. He was, however, knighted; he had a place in the household; and he subsequently received other marks of favor from the court.

Addison did not remain long in Ireland. In 1715 he quitted his secretaryship for a seat at the Board of Trade. In the same year his comedy of the Drummer was brought on the stage. The name of the author was not announced; the piece was coldly received; and some critics have expressed a doubt whether it were really Addison's. To us the evidence, both external and internal, seems decisive. It is not in Addison's best manner; but it contains numerous passages which no other writer known to us could have produced. It was again performed after Addison's death, and, being known to be his, was loudly applauded.

Towards the close of the year 1715, while the Rebellion was still raging in Scotland, Addison published the first number of a paper called the *Freeholder*. Among his political works the *Freeholder* is entitled to the first place. Even in the *Spectator* there are few serious papers nobler than

the character of his friend Lord Somers, and certainly no satirical papers superior to those in which the Tory fox-hunter is introduced. This character is the original of Squire Western, and is drawn with all Fielding's force, and with a delicacy of which Fielding was altogether destitute. As none of Addison's works exhibits stronger marks of his genius than the *Freeholder*, so none does more honor to his moral character. It is difficult to extol too highly the candor and humanity of a political writer whom even the excitement of civil war cannot hurry into unseemly violence. Oxford, it is well known, was then the stronghold of Toryism. The High Street had been repeatedly lined with bayonets in order to keep down the disaffected gownsmen; and traitors pursued by the messengers of the government had been concealed in the garrets of several colleges. Yet the admonition which, even under such circumstances, Addison addressed to the university, is singularly gentle, respectful, and even affectionate. Indeed, he could not find it in his heart to deal harshly even with imaginary persons. His fox-hunter, though ignorant, stupid, and violent, is at heart a good fellow, and is at last reclaimed by the clemency of the king. Steele was dissatisfied with his friend's moderation, and, though he acknowledged that the *Freeholder* was excellently written, complained that the ministry played on a lute when it was necessary to blow the trumpet. He accordingly

determined to execute a flourish after his own fashion, and tried to rouse the public spirit of the nation by means of a paper called the *Town Talk*, which is now as utterly forgotten as his *Englishman*, as his Crisis, as his Letter to the Bailiff of Stockbridge, as his Reader, in short, as everything that he wrote without the help of Addison.

In the same year in which the Drummer was acted, and in which the first numbers of the *Freeholder* appeared, the estrangement of Pope and Addison became complete. Addison had from the first seen that Pope was false and malevolent. Pope had discovered that Addison was jealous. The discovery was made in a strange manner. Pope had written the Rape of the Lock, in two cantos, without supernatural machinery. These two cantos had been loudly applauded, and by none more loudly than by Addison. Then Pope thought of the Sylphs and Gnomes, Ariel, Momentilla, Crispissa, and Umbriel, and resolved to interweave the Rosicrucian mythology with the original fabric. He asked Addison's advice. Addison said that the poem as it stood was a delicious little thing, and entreated Pope not to run the risk of marring what was so excellent in trying to mend it. Pope afterward declared that this insidious counsel first opened his eyes to the baseness of him who gave it.

Now there can be no doubt that Pope's plan was most ingenious, and that he afterwards executed it

with great skill and success. But does it necessarily follow that Addison's advice was bad? And if Addison's advice was bad, does it necessarily follow that it was given from bad motives? If a friend were to ask us whether we would advise him to risk his all in a lottery of which the chances were ten to one against him, we should do our best to dissuade him from running such a risk. Even if he were so lucky as to get the thirty thousand pound prize, we should not admit that we had counselled him ill; and we should certainly think it the height of injustice in him to accuse us of having been actuated by malice. We think Addison's advice good advice. It rested on a sound principle, the result of long and wide experience. The general rule undoubtedly is that, when a successful work of imagination has been produced, it should not be recast. We cannot at this moment call to mind a single instance in which this rule has been transgressed with happy effect, except the instance of the Rape of the Lock. Tasso recast his Jerusalem. Akenside recast his Pleasures of the Imagination, and his Epistle to Curio. Pope himself, emboldened no doubt by the success with which he had expanded and remodelled the Rape of the Lock, made the same experiment on the Dunciad. All these attempts failed. Who was to foresee that Pope would, once in his life, be able to do what he could not himself do twice, and what nobody else has ever done?

Addison's advice was good. But had it been bad, why should we pronounce it dishonest? Scott tells us that one of his best friends predicted the failure of Waverley. Herder adjured Goethe not to take so unpromising a subject as Faust. Hume tried to dissuade Robertson from writing the History of Charles the Fifth. Nay, Pope himself was one of those who prophesied that Cato would never succeed on the stage, and advised Addison to print it without risking a representation. But Scott, Goethe, Robertson, Addison, had the good sense and generosity to give their advisers credit for the best intentions. Pope's heart was not of the same kind with theirs.

In 1715, while he was engaged in translating the Iliad, he met Addison at a coffee-house. Philips and Budgell were there; but their sovereign got rid of them, and asked Pope to dine with him alone. After dinner, Addison said that he lay under a difficulty which he wished to explain. "Tickell," he said, "translated some time ago the first book of the Iliad. I have promised to look it over and correct it. I cannot, therefore, ask to see yours, for that would be double-dealing." Pope made a civil reply, and begged that his second book might have the advantage of Addison's revision. Addison readily agreed, looked over the second book, and sent it back with warm commendations.

Tickell's version of the first book appeared soon

after this conversation. In the preface, all rivalry was earnestly disclaimed. Tickell declared that he should not go on with the Iliad. That enterprise he should leave to powers which he admitted to be superior to his own. His only view, he said, in publishing this specimen was to bespeak the favor of the public to a translation of the Odyssey, in which he had made some progress.

Addison, and Addison's devoted followers, pronounced both the versions good, but maintained that Tickell's had more of the original. The town gave a decided preference to Pope's. We do not think it worth while to settle such a question of precedence. Neither of the rivals can be said to have translated the Iliad, unless indeed, the word translation be used in the sense which it bears in the Midsummer Night's Dream. When Bottom makes his appearance with an ass's head instead of his own, Peter Quince exclaims, "Bless thee! Bottom, bless thee! thou art translated." In this sense, undoubtedly, the readers of either Pope or Tickell may very properly exclaim, "Bless thee! Homer; thou art translated indeed."

Our readers will, we hope, agree with us in thinking that no man in Addison's situation could have acted more fairly and kindly, both towards Pope, and towards Tickell, than he appears to have done. But an odious suspicion had sprung up in the mind of Pope. He fancied, and he soon firmly believed, that there was a deep con-

spiracy against his fame and his fortunes. The work on which he had staked his reputation was to be depreciated. The subscription, on which rested his hopes of a competence, was to be defeated. With this view Addison had made a rival translation: Tickell had consented to father it; and the wits of Button's had united to puff it.

Is there any external evidence to support this grave accusation? The answer is short. There is absolutely none.

Was there any internal evidence which proved Addison to be the author of this version? Was it a work which Tickell was incapable of producing? Surely not. Tickell was a fellow of a college at Oxford, and must be supposed to have been able to construe the Iliad; and he was a better versifier than his friend. We are not aware that Pope pretended to have discovered any turns of expression peculiar to Addison. Had such turns of expression been discovered, they would be sufficiently accounted for by supposing Addison to have corrected his friend's lines, as he owned that he had done.

Is there anything in the character of the accused persons which makes the accusation probable? We answer confidently—nothing. Tickell was long after this time described by Pope himself as a very fair and worthy man. Addison had been, during many years, before the public. Literary rivals, political opponents, had kept their eyes on him.

But neither envy nor faction, in their utmost rage, had ever imputed to him a single deviation from the laws of honor and of social morality. Had he been indeed a man meanly jealous of fame, and capable of stooping to base and wicked arts for the purpose of injuring his competitors, would his vices have remained latent so long? He was a writer of tragedy: had he ever injured Rowe? He was a writer of comedy: had he not done ample justice to Congreve, and given valuable help to Steele? He was a pamphleteer: have not his good nature and generosity been acknowledged by Swift, his rival in fame and his adversary in politics?

That Tickell should have been guilty of a villany seems to us highly improbable. That Addison should have been guilty of a villany seems to us highly improbable. But that these two men should have conspired together to commit a villany seems to us improbable in a tenfold degree. All that is known to us of their intercourse tends to prove, that it was not the intercourse of two accomplices in crime. These are some of the lines in which Tickell poured forth his sorrow over the coffin of Addison:—

"Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
Oh, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me thine aid, thou guardian genius, lend,
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,

> When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
> In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
> And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
> Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
> Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more."

In what words, we should like to know, did this guardian genius invite his pupil to join in a plan such as the editor of the *Satirist* would hardly dare to propose to the editor of the *Age*?

We do not accuse Pope of bringing an accusation which he knew to be false. We have not the smallest doubt that he believed it to be true; and the evidence on which he believed it he found in his own bad heart. His own life was one long series of tricks, as mean and as malicious as that of which he suspected Addison and Tickell. He was all stiletto and mask. To injure, to insult, and to save himself from the consequences of injury and insult by lying and equivocating, was the habit of his life. He published a lampoon on the Duke of Chandos; he was taxed with it; and he lied and equivocated. He published a lampoon on Aaron Hill; he was taxed with it; and he lied and equivocated. He published a still fouler lampoon on Lady Mary Wortley Montague; he was taxed with it; and he lied with more than usual effrontery and vehemence. He puffed himself and abused his enemies under feigned names. He robbed himself of his own letters, and then raised the hue and cry after them. Besides his frauds of

malignity, of fear, of interest, and of vanity, there were frauds which he seems to have committed from love of fraud alone. He had a habit of stratagem, a pleasure in outwitting all who came near him. Whatever his object might be, the indirect road to it was that which he preferred. For Bolingbroke, Pope undoubtedly felt as much love and veneration as it was in his nature to feel for any human being. Yet Pope was scarcely dead when it was discovered that, from no motive except the mere love of artifice, he had been guilty of an act of gross perfidy to Bolingbroke.

Nothing was more natural than that such a man as this should attribute to others that which he felt within himself. A plain, probable, coherent explanation is frankly given to him. He is certain that it is all a romance. A line of conduct scrupulously fair, and even friendly, is pursued towards him. He is convinced that it is merely a cover for a vile intrigue by which he is to be disgraced and ruined. It is vain to ask him for proofs. He has none, and wants none, except those which he carries in his own bosom.

Whether Pope's malignity at length provoked Addison to retaliate for the first and last time, cannot now be known with certainty. We have only Pope's story, which runs thus. A pamphlet appeared containing some reflections which stung Pope to the quick. What those reflections were, and whether they were reflections of which he had

a right to complain, we have now no means of deciding The Earl of Warwick, a foolish and vicious lad, who regarded Addison with the feelings with which such lads generally regard their best friends, told Pope, truly or falsely, that this pamphlet had been written by Addison's direction. When we consider what a tendency stories have to grow, in passing even from one honest man to another honest man, and when we consider that to the name of honest man neither Pope nor the Earl of Warwick had a claim, we are not disposed to attach much importance to this anecdote.

It is certain, however, that Pope was furious. He had already sketched the character of Atticus in prose. In his anger he turned this prose into the brilliant and energetic lines which everybody knows by heart, or ought to know by heart, and sent them to Addison. One charge which Pope has enforced with great skill is probably not without foundation. Addison was, we are inclined to believe, too fond of presiding over a circle of humble friends. Of the other imputations which these famous lines are intended to convey, scarcely one has ever been proved to be just, and some are certainly false. That Addison was not in the habit of "damning with faint praise" appears from innumerable passages in his writings, and from none more than from those in which he mentions Pope. And it is not merely unjust, but ridiculous, to describe a man who made the fortune

of almost every one of his intimate friends, as "so obliging that he ne'er obliged."

That Addison felt the sting of Pope's satire keenly, we cannot doubt. That he was conscious of one of the weaknesses with which he was reproached is highly probable. But his heart, we firmly believe, acquitted him of the gravest part of the accusation. He acted like himself. As a satirist he was, at his own weapons, more than Pope's match, and he would have been at no loss for topics. A distorted and diseased body, tenanted by a yet more distorted and diseased mind; spite and envy thinly disguised by sentiments as benevolent and noble as those which Sir Peter Teazle admired in Mr. Joseph Surface; a feeble, sickly licentiousness; an odious love of filthy and noisome images; these were things which a genius less powerful than that to which we owe the *Spectator* could easily have held up to the mirth and hatred of mankind. Addison had, moreover, at his command, other means of vengeance which a bad man would not have scrupled to use. He was powerful in the state. Pope was a Catholic; and, in those times, a minister would have found it easy to harass the most innocent Catholic by innumerable petty vexations. Pope, near twenty years later, said that "through the lenity of the government alone he could live with comfort." "Consider," he exclaimed, "the injury that a man of high rank and credit may do to a

private person, under penal laws and many other disadvantages." It is pleasing to reflect that the only revenge which Addison took was to insert in the *Freeholder* a warm encomium on the translation of the Iliad, and to exhort all lovers of learning to put down their names as subscribers. There could be no doubt, he said, from the specimens already published, that the masterly hand of Pope would do as much for Homer as Dryden had done for Virgil. From that time to the end of his life, he always treated Pope, by Pope's own acknowledgment, with justice. Friendship was, of course, at an end.

One reason which induced the Earl of Warwick to play the ignominious part of talebearer on this occasion, may have been his dislike of the marriage which was about to take place between his mother and Addison. The Countess Dowager, a daughter of the old and honorable family of the Middletons of Chirk, a family which, in any country but ours, would be called noble, resided at Holland House. Addison had, during some years, occupied at Chelsea a small dwelling, once the abode of Nell Gwynn. Chelsea is now a district of London, and Holland House may be called a town residence. But, in the days of Anne and George the First, milkmaids and sportsmen wandered between green hedges, and over fields bright with daisies, from Kensington almost to the shore of the Thames. Addison and Lady Warwick were coun-

try neighbors, and became intimate friends. The great wit and scholar tried to allure the young lord from the fashionable amusements of beating watchmen, breaking windows, and rolling women in hogsheads down Holborn Hill, to the study of letters and the practice of virtue. These well-meant exertions did little good, however, either to the disciple or to the master. Lord Warwick grew up a rake; and Addison fell in love. The mature beauty of the countess has been celebrated by poets in language which, after a very large allowance has been made for flattery, would lead us to believe that she was a fine woman; and her rank doubtless heightened her attractions. The courtship was long. The hopes of the lover appear to have risen and fallen with the fortunes of his party. His attachment was at length matter of such notoriety that, when he visited Ireland for the last time, Rowe addressed some consolatory verses to the Chloe of Holland House. It strikes us as a little strange that, in these verses, Addison should be called Lycidas, a name of singularly evil omen for a swain just about to cross St. George's Channel.

At length Chloe capitulated. Addison was indeed able to treat with her on equal terms. He had reason to expect preferment even higher than that which he had attained. He had inherited the fortune of a brother who died Governor of Madras. He had purchased an estate in Warwick-

shire, and had been welcomed to his domain in very tolerable verse by one of the neighboring squires, the poetical fox-hunter, William Somerville. In August, 1716, the newspapers announced that Joseph Addison, Esquire, famous for many excellent works, both in verse and prose, had espoused the Countess Dowager of Warwick.

He now fixed his abode at Holland House, a house which can boast of a greater number of inmates distinguished in political and literary history than any other private dwelling in England. His portrait still hangs there. The features are pleasing; the complexion is remarkably fair; but in the expression we trace rather the gentleness of his disposition than the force and keenness of his intellect.

Not long after his marriage he reached the height of civil greatness. The Whig Government had, during some time, been torn by internal dissensions. Lord Townshend led one section of the Cabinet, Lord Sunderland the other. At length, in the spring of 1717, Sunderland triumphed. Townshend retired from office, and was accompanied by Walpole and Cowper. Sunderland proceeded to reconstruct the Ministry; and Addison was appointed Secretary of State. It is certain that the Seals were pressed upon him, and were at first declined by him. Men equally versed in official business might easily have been found; and his colleagues knew that they could not expect assist-

ance from him in debate. He owed his elevation to his popularity, to his stainless probity, and to his literary fame.

But scarcely had Addison entered the Cabinet when his health began to fail. From one serious attack he recovered in the autumn; and his recovery was celebrated in Latin verses, worthy of his own pen, by Vincent Bourne, who was then at Trinity College, Cambridge. A relapse soon took place; and, in the following spring, Addison was prevented by a severe asthma from discharging the duties of his post. He resigned it, and was succeeded by his friend Craggs, a young man whose natural parts, though little improved by cultivation, were quick and showy, whose graceful person and winning manners had made him generally acceptable in society, and who, if he had lived, would probably have been the most formidable of all the rivals of Walpole.

As yet there was no Joseph Hume. The ministers, therefore, were able to bestow on Addison a retiring pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year. In what form this pension was given we are not told by the biographers, and have not time to inquire. But it is certain that Addison did not vacate his seat in the House of Commons.

Rest of mind and body seemed to have reëstablished his health; and he thanked God. with cheerful piety, for having set him free both from his office and from his asthma. Many years

seemed to be before him, and he meditated many works, a tragedy on the death of Socrates, a translation of the Psalms, a treatise on the evidences of Christianity. Of this last performance, a part, which we could well spare, has come down to us.

But the fatal complaint soon returned, and gradually prevailed against all the resources of medicine. It is melancholy to think that the last months of such a life should have been overclouded both by domestic and by political vexations. A tradition which began early, which has been generally received, and to which we have nothing to oppose, has represented his wife as an arrogant and imperious woman. It is said that, till his health failed him, he was glad to escape from the Countess Dowager and her magnificent dining-room, blazing with the gilded devices of the house of Rich, to some tavern where he could enjoy a laugh, a talk about Virgil and Boileau, and a bottle of claret with the friends of his happier days. All those friends, however, were not left to him. Sir Richard Steele had been gradually estranged by various causes. He considered himself as one who, in evil times, had braved martyrdom for his political principles, and demanded, when the Whig party was triumphant, a large compensation for what he had suffered when it was militant. The Whig leaders took a very different view of his claims. They thought that he had, by his own petulance and folly, brought them as well

as himself into trouble, and though they did not absolutely neglect him, doled out favors to him with a sparing hand. It was natural that he should be angry with them, and especially angry with Addison. But what above all seems to have disturbed Sir Richard, was the elevation of Tickell, who, at thirty, was made by Addison Undersecretary of State, while the editor of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, the author of the Crisis, the member for Stockbridge who had been persecuted for firm adherence to the house of Hanover, was, at near fifty, forced, after many solicitations and complaints, to content himself with a share in the patent of Drury Lane Theatre. Steele himself says, in his celebrated letter to Congreve, that Addison, by his preference of Tickell, "incurred the warmest resentment of other gentlemen;" and everything seems to indicate that, of those resentful gentlemen, Steele was himself one.

While poor Sir Richard was brooding over what he considered as Addison's unkindness, a new cause of quarrel arose. The Whig party, already divided against itself, was rent by a new schism. The celebrated bill for limiting the number of peers had been brought in. The proud Duke of Somerset, first in rank of all the nobles whose origin permitted them to sit in Parliament, was the ostensible author of the measure. But it was supported, and, in truth, devised by the Prime Minister.

We are satisfied that the bill was most pernicious; and we fear that the motives which induced Sunderland to frame it were not honorable to him. But we cannot deny that it was supported by many of the best and wisest men of that age. Nor was this strange. The royal prerogative had, within the memory of the generation then in the vigor of life, been so grossly abused, that it was still regarded with a jealousy which, when the peculiar situation of the House of Brunswick is considered, may perhaps be called immoderate. The particular prerogative of creating peers had, in the opinion of the Whigs, been grossly abused by Queen Anne's last Ministry; and even the Tories admitted that her majesty in swamping, as it has since been called, the Upper House, had done what only an extreme case could justify. The theory of the English constitution, according to many high authorities, was that three independent powers, the sovereign, the nobility, and the commons, ought constantly to act as checks on each other. If this theory were sound, it seemed to follow that to put one of these powers under the absolute control of the other two was absurd. But if the number of peers were unlimited, it could not well be denied that the Upper House was under the absolute control of the Crown and the Commons, and was indebted only to their moderation for any power which it might be suffered to retain.

Steele took part with the Opposition, Addison with the ministers. Steele, in a paper called the *Plebeian*, vehemently attacked the bill. Sunderland called for help on Addison, and Addison obeyed the call. In a paper called the *Old Whig*, he answered, and indeed refuted Steele's arguments. It seems to us that the premises of both the controversialists were unsound, that, on those premises, Addison reasoned well and Steele ill, and that consequently Addison brought out a false conclusion, while Steele blundered upon the truth. In style, in wit, and in politeness, Addison maintained his superiority, though the *Old Whig* is by no means one of his happiest performances.

At first, both the anonymous opponents observed the laws of propriety. But at length Steele so far forgot himself as to throw an odious imputation on the morals of the chiefs of the administration. Addison replied with severity, but, in our opinion, with less severity than was due to so grave an offence against morality and decorum; nor did he, in his just anger, forget for a moment the laws of good taste and good breeding. One calumny which has been often repeated, and never yet contradicted, it is our duty to expose. It is asserted in the *Biographia Britannica*, that Addison designated Steele as "little Dicky." This assertion was repeated by Johnson, who had never seen the *Old Whig*, and was therefore excusable. It has also been repeated by Miss Aikin, who has seen the *Old*

Whig, and for whom therefore there is less excuse. Now, it is true that the words "little Dicky" occur in the *Old Whig*, and that Steele's name was Richard. It is equally true that the words "little Isaac" occur in the Duenna, and that Newton's name was Isaac. But we confidently affirm that Addison's little Dicky had no more to do with Steele, than Sheridan's little Isaac with Newton If we apply the words "little Dicky" to Steele, we deprive a very lively and ingenious passage, not only of all its wit, but of all its meaning. Little Dicky was the nickname of Henry Norris, an actor of remarkably small stature, but of great humor, who played the usurer Gomez, then a most popular part, in Dryden's Spanish Friar.

The merited reproof which Steele had received, though softened by some kind and courteous expressions, galled him bitterly. He replied with little force and great acrimony; but no rejoinder appeared. Addison was fast hastening to his grave; and had, we may well suppose, little disposition to prosecute a quarrel with an old friend. His complaint had terminated in dropsy. He bore up long and manfully. But at length he abandoned all hope, dismissed his physicians, and calmly prepared himself to die.

His works he intrusted to the care of Tickell, and dedicated them a very few days before his death to Craggs, in a letter written with the sweet and graceful eloquence of a Saturday's *Spectator*.

In this, his last composition, he alluded to his approaching end in words so manly, so cheerful, and so tender, that it is difficult to read them without tears. At the same time he earnestly recommended the interests of Tickell to the care of Craggs.

Within a few hours of the time at which this dedication was written, Addison sent to beg Gay, who was then living by his wits about town, to come to Holland House. Gay went, and was received with great kindness. To his amazement his forgiveness was implored by the dying man. Poor Gay, the most good-natured and simple of mankind, could not imagine what he had to forgive. There was, however, some wrong, the remembrance of which weighed on Addison's mind, and which he declared himself anxious to repair. He was in a state of extreme exhaustion; and the parting was doubtless a friendly one on both sides. Gay supposed that some plan to serve him had been in agitation at Court, and had been frustrated by Addison's influence. Nor is this improbable. Gay had paid assiduous court to the royal family. But in the Queen's days he had been the eulogist of Bolingbroke, and was still connected with many Tories. It is not strange that Addison, while heated by conflict, should have thought himself justified in obstructing the preferment of one whom he might regard as a political enemy. Neither is it strange that, when

reviewing his whole life, and earnestly scrutinizing all his motives, he should think that he had acted an unkind and ungenerous part, in using his power against a distressed man of letters, who was as harmless and as helpless as a child.

One inference may be drawn from this anecdote. It appears that Addison, on his death-bed, called himself to a strict account, and was not at ease till he had asked pardon for an injury which it was not even suspected that he had committed, for an injury which would have caused disquiet only to a very tender conscience. Is it not then reasonable to infer that, if he had really been guilty of forming a base conspiracy against the fame and fortunes of a rival, he would have expressed some remorse for so serious a crime? But it is unnecessary to multiply arguments and evidence for the defence, when there is neither argument nor evidence for the accusation.

The last moments of Addison were perfectly serene. His interview with his son-in-law is universally known. "See," he said, "how a Christian can die." The piety of Addison was, in truth, of a singularly cheerful character. The feeling which predominates in all his devotional writings is gratitude. God was to him the allwise and allpowerful friend who had watched over his cradle with more than maternal tenderness; who had listened to his cries before they could form themselves in prayer; who had preserved his youth

from the snares of vice; who had made his cup run over with worldly blessings; who had doubled the value of those blessings by bestowing a thankful heart to enjoy them, and dear friends to partake them; who had rebuked the waves of the Ligurian gulf, had purified the autumnal air of the Campagna, and had restrained the avalanches of Mont Cenis. Of the Psalms, his favorite was that which represents the Ruler of all things under the endearing image of a shepherd, whose crook guides the flock safe, through gloomy and desolate glens, to meadows well watered and rich with herbage. On that goodness to which he ascribed all the happiness of his life, he relied in the hour of death with the love that casteth out fear. He died on the seventeenth of June, 1719. He had just entered on his forty-eighth year.

His body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was borne thence to the Abbey at dead of night. The choir sang a funeral hymn. Bishop Atterbury, one of those Tories who had loved and honored the most accomplished of the Whigs, met the corpse, and led the procession by torchlight, round the shrine of Saint Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets, to the Chapel of Henry the Seventh. On the north side of that chapel, in the vault of the house of Albemarle, the coffin of Addison lies next to the coffin of Montague. Yet a few months, and the same mourners passed again along the same aisle. The same sad anthem was

again chanted. The same vault was again opened; and the coffin of Craggs was placed close to the coffin of Addison.

Many tributes were paid to the memory of Addison; but one alone is now remembered. Tickell bewailed his friend in an elegy which would do honor to the greatest name in our literature, and which unites the energy and magnificence of Dryden to the tenderness and purity of Cowper. This fine poem was prefixed to a superb edition of Addison's works, which was published in 1721, by subscription. The names of the subscribers proved how widely his fame had been spread. That his countrymen should be eager to possess his writings, even in a costly form, is not wonderful. But it is wonderful that, though English literature was then little studied on the continent, Spanish grandees, Italian prelates, marshals of France, should be found in the list. Among the most remarkable names are those of the Queen of Sweden, of Prince Eugene, of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, of the Dukes of Parma, Modena, and Guastalla, of the Doge of Genoa, of the Regent Orleans, and of Cardinal Dubois. We ought to add that this edition, though eminently beautiful, is in some important points defective; nor, indeed, do we yet possess a complete collection of Addison's writings.

It is strange that neither his opulent and noble widow, nor any of his powerful and attached

friends, should have thought of placing even a simple tablet, inscribed with his name, on the walls of the Abbey. It was not till three generations had laughed and wept over his pages, that the omission was supplied by the public veneration. At length, in our own time, his image, skilfully graven, appeared in Poet's Corner. It represents him, as we can conceive him, clad in his dressing-gown, and freed from his wig, stepping from his parlor at Chelsea into his trim little garden, with the account of the Everlasting Club, or the Loves of Hilpa and Shalum, just finished for the next day's *Spectator*, in his hand. Such a mark of national respect was due to the unsullied statesman, to the accomplished scholar, to the master of pure English eloquence, to the consummate painter of life and manners. It was due, above all, to the great satirist, who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit and virtue, after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism.

THE

LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON

1709-1784

Samuel Johnson, one of the most eminent English writers of the eighteenth century, was the son of Michael Johnson, who was, at the beginning of that century, a magistrate of Lichfield, and a bookseller of great note in the midland counties. Michael's abilities and attainments seem to have been considerable. He was so well acquainted with the contents of the volumes which he exposed to sale, that the country rectors of Staffordshire and Worcestershire thought him an oracle on points of learning. Between him and the clergy, indeed, there was a strong religious and political sympathy. He was a zealous churchman, and, though he had qualified himself for municipal office by taking the oaths to the sovereigns in possession, was to the last a Jacobite in heart. At his house, a house which is still pointed out to every traveller who visits Lichfield, Samuel was born on the 18th of September, 1709. In the child, the physical, intellectual, and moral peculiarities which afterwards distinguished the man were plainly discern-

ible,—great muscular strength, accompanied by much awkwardness and many infirmities; great quickness of parts, with a morbid propensity to sloth and procrastination; a kind and generous heart, with a gloomy and irritable temper. He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint, which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. His parents were weak enough to believe that the royal touch was a specific for this malady. In his third year he was taken up to London, inspected by the court surgeon, prayed over by the court chaplains, and stroked and presented with a piece of gold by Queen Anne. One of his earliest recollections was that of a stately lady in a diamond stomacher and a long black hood. Her hand was applied in vain. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular, were distorted by his malady. His cheeks were deeply scarred. He lost for a time the sight of one eye; and he saw but very imperfectly with the other. But the force of his mind overcame every impediment. Indolent as he was, he acquired knowledge with such ease and rapidity that at every school to which he was sent he was soon the best scholar. From sixteen to eighteen he resided at home, and was left to his own devices. He learned much at this time, though his studies were without guidance and without plan. He ransacked his father's shelves, dipped into a multitude of books, read what was

interesting, and passed over what was dull. An ordinary lad would have acquired little or no useful knowledge in such a way; but much that was dull to ordinary lads was interesting to Samuel. He read little Greek, for his proficiency in that language was not such that he could take much pleasure in the masters of Attic poetry and eloquence. But he had left school a good Latinist, and he soon acquired, in the large and miscellaneous library of which he now had the command, an extensive knowledge of Latin literature. That Augustan delicacy of taste, which is the boast of the great public schools of England, he never possessed. But he was early familiar with some classical writers, who were quite unknown to the best scholars in the sixth form at Eton. He was peculiarly attracted by the works of the great restorers of learning. Once, while searching for some apples, he found a huge folio volume of Petrarch's works. The name excited his curiosity, and he eagerly devoured hundreds of pages. Indeed, the diction and versification of his own Latin compositions show that he had paid at least as much attention to modern copies from the antique as to the original models.

While he was thus irregularly educating himself, his family was sinking into hopeless poverty. Old Michael Johnson was much better qualified to pore upon books, and to talk about them, than to trade in them. His business declined; his

debts increased; it was with difficulty that the daily expenses of his household were defrayed. It was out of his power to support his son at either university, but a wealthy neighbor offered assistance; and, in reliance on promises which proved to be of very little value, Samuel was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. When the young scholar presented himself to the rulers of that society, they were amazed not more by his ungainly figure and eccentric manners than by the quantity of extensive and curious information which he had picked up during many months of desultory but not unprofitable study. On the first day of his residence, he surprised his teachers by quoting Macrobius; and one of the most learned among them declared that he had never known a freshman of equal attainments.

At Oxford, Johnson resided during about three years. He was poor, even to raggedness; and his appearance excited a mirth and a pity which were equally intolerable to his haughty spirit. He was driven from the quadrangle of Christ Church by the sneering looks which the members of that aristocratical society cast at the holes in his shoes. Some charitable person placed a new pair at his door; but he spurned them away in a fury. Distress made him, not servile, but reckless and ungovernable. No opulent gentleman commoner, panting for one-and-twenty, could have treated the academical authorities with more

gross disrespect. The needy scholar was generally to be seen under the gate of Pembroke, a gate now adorned with his effigy, haranguing a circle of lads, over whom, in spite of his tattered gown and dirty linen, his wit and audacity gave him an undisputed ascendency. In every mutiny against the discipline of the college he was the ringleader Much was pardoned, however, to a youth so highly distinguished by abilities and acquirements. He had early made himself known by turning Pope's "Messiah" into Latin verse The style and rhythm, indeed, were not exactly Virgilian; but the translation found many admirers, and was read with pleasure by Pope himself.

The time drew near at which Johnson would, in the ordinary course of things, have become a Bachelor of Arts; but he was at the end of his resources. Those promises of support on which he had relied had not been kept. His family could do nothing for him. His debts to Oxford tradesmen were small indeed, yet larger than he could pay. In the autumn of 1731 he was under the necessity of quitting the university without a degree. In the following winter his father died. The old man left but a pittance; and of that pittance almost the whole was appropriated to the support of his widow. The property to which Samuel succeeded amounted to no more than twenty pounds.

His life, during the thirty years which followed, was one hard struggle with poverty. The misery of that struggle needed no aggravation, but was aggravated by the sufferings of an unsound body and an unsound mind. Before the young man left the university, his hereditary malady had broken forth in a singularly cruel form. He had become an incurable hypochondriac. He said long after that he had been mad all his life, or at least not perfectly sane; and, in truth, eccentricities less strange than his have often been thought grounds sufficient for absolving felons, and for setting aside wills. His grimaces, his gestures, his mutterings, sometimes diverted and sometimes terrified people who did not know him. At a dinner-table he would, in a fit of absence, stoop down and twitch off a lady's shoe. He would amaze a drawing-room by suddenly ejaculating a clause of the Lord's Prayer. He would conceive an unintelligible aversion to a particular alley, and perform a great circuit rather than see the hateful place. He would set his heart on touching every post in the streets through which he walked. If by any chance he missed a post, he would go back a hundred yards and repair the omission. Under the influence of his disease his senses became morbidly torpid, and his imagination morbidly active. At one time he would stand poring on the town clock without being able to tell the hour. At another,

he would distinctly hear his mother, who was many miles off, calling him by his name. But this was not the worst. A deep melancholy took possession of him, and gave a dark tinge to all his views of human nature and of human destiny. Such wretchedness as he endured has driven many men to shoot themselves or drown themselves. But he was under no temptation to commit suicide. He was sick of life; but he was afraid of death; and he shuddered at every sight or sound which reminded him of the inevitable hour. In religion he found but little comfort during his long and frequent fits of dejection: for his religion partook of his own character. The light from heaven shone on him indeed, but not in a direct line, or with its own pure splendor. The rays had to struggle through a disturbing medium: they reached him refracted, dulled, and discolored by the thick gloom which had settled on his soul, and, though they might be sufficiently clear to guide him, were too dim to cheer him.

With such infirmities of body and of mind, this celebrated man was left, at two-and-twenty, to fight his way through the world. He remained during about five years in the midland counties. At Lichfield, his birthplace and his early home, he had inherited some friends, and acquired others. He was kindly noticed by Henry Hervey, a gay officer of noble family, who happened to be quartered there. Gilbert Walmesley, registrar of

the ecclesiastical court of the diocese, a man of distinguished parts, learning, and knowledge of the world, did himself honor by patronizing the young adventurer, whose repulsive person, unpolished manners, and squalid garb, moved many of the petty aristocracy of the neighborhood to laughter or to disgust. At Lichfield, however, Johnson could find no way of earning a livelihood. He became usher of a grammar school in Leicestershire; he resided as a humble companion in the house of a country gentleman; but a life of dependence was insupportable to his haughty spirit. He repaired to Birmingham, and there earned a few guineas by literary drudgery. In that town he printed a translation, little noticed at the time, and long forgotten, of a Latin book about Abyssinia. He then put forth proposals for publishing by subscription the poems of Politian, with notes containing a history of modern Latin verse; but subscriptions did not come in, and the volume never appeared.

While leading this vagrant and miserable life, Johnson fell in love. The object of his passion was Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, a widow who had children as old as himself. To ordinary spectators, the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman, painted half an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colors, and fond of exhibiting provincial airs and graces which were not exactly those of the Queensberrys and Lepels. To Johnson,

however, whose passions were strong, whose eyesight was too weak to distinguish ceruse from natural bloom, and who had seldom or never been in the same room with a woman of real fashion, his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. That his admiration was unfeigned cannot be doubted; for she was as poor as himself. She accepted, with a readiness which did her little honor, the addresses of a suitor who might have been her son. The marriage, however, in spite of occasional wranglings, proved happier than might have been expected. The lover continued to be under the illusions of the wedding-day till the lady died in her sixty-fourth year. On her monument he placed an inscription extolling the charms of her person and of her manners; and when, long after her decease, he had occasion to mention her, he exclaimed, with a tenderness half ludicrous, half pathetic, "Pretty creature!"

His marriage made it necessary for him to exert himself more strenuously than he had hitherto done. He took a house in the neighborhood of his native town, and advertised for pupils. But eighteen months passed away, and only three pupils came to his academy. Indeed, his appearance was so strange, and his temper so violent, that his schoolroom must have resembled an ogre's den. Nor was the tawdry, painted grandmother whom he called his Titty, well qualified

to make provision for the comfort of young gentlemen. David Garrick, who was one of the pupils, used many years later to throw the best company of London into convulsions of laughter by mimicking the endearments of this extraordinary pair.

At length Johnson, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, determined to seek his fortune in the capital as a literary adventurer. He set out with a few guineas, three acts of the tragedy of "Irene" in manuscript, and two or three letters of introduction from his friend Walmesley.

Never since literature became a calling in England had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London. In the preceding generation, a writer of eminent merit was sure to be munificently rewarded by the government. The least that he could expect was a pension or a sinecure place; and, if he showed any aptitude for politics, he might hope to be a member of parliament, a lord of the treasury, an ambassador, a secretary of state. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name several writers of the nineteenth century of whom the least successful has received forty thousand pounds from the booksellers. But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity. Literature had ceased to flourish under the patronage of the great, and had not

begun to flourish under the patronage of the public. One man of letters, indeed, Pope, had acquired by his pen what was then considered as a handsome fortune, and lived on a footing of equality with nobles and ministers of state. But this was a solitary exception. Even an author whose reputation was established, and whose works were popular; such an author as Thomson, whose "Seasons" were in every library; such an author as Fielding whose "Pasquin" had had a greater run than any drama since the "Beggars' Opera," was sometimes glad to obtain, by pawning his best coat, the means of dining on tripe at a cookshop underground, where he could wipe his hands, after his greasy meal, on the back of a Newfoundland dog. It is easy, therefore, to imagine what humiliations and privations must have awaited the novice who had still to earn a name. One of the publishers to whom Johnson applied for employment, measured with a scornful eye that athletic, though uncouth, frame, and exclaimed, "You had better get a porter's knot, and carry trunks." Nor was the advice bad; for a porter was likely to be as plentifully fed, and as comfortably lodged, as a poet.

Some time appears to have elapsed before Johnson was able to form any literary connection from which he could expect more than bread for the day which was passing over him. He never forgot the generosity with which Hervey, who

was now residing in London, relieved his wants during his time of trial. "Harry Hervey," said the old philosopher many years later, "was a vicious man; but he was very kind to me. If you call a dog Hervey, I shall love him." At Hervey's table Johnson sometimes enjoyed feasts which were made more agreeable by contrast. But in general he dined, and thought that he dined well, on sixpennyworth of meat and a pennyworth of bread at an alehouse near Drury Lane.

The effect of the privations and sufferings which he endured at this time was discernible to the last in his temper and his deportment. His manners had never been courtly. They now became almost savage. Being frequently under the necessity of wearing shabby coats and dirty shirts, he became a confirmed sloven. Being often very hungry when he sat down to his meals, he contracted a habit of eating with ravenous greediness. Even to the end of his life, and even at the tables of the great, the sight of food affected him as it affects wild beasts and birds of prey. His taste in cookery, formed in subterranean ordinaries and *à la mode* beefshops, was far from delicate. Whenever he was so fortunate as to have near him a hare that had been kept too long, or a meat-pie made with rancid butter, he gorged himself with such violence that his veins swelled, and the moisture broke out on his forehead. The affronts which his poverty emboldened

stupid and low-minded men to offer to him, would have broken a mean spirit into sycophancy, but made him rude even to ferocity. Unhappily the insolence which, while it was defensive, was pardonable, and in some sense respectable, accompanied him into societies where he was treated with courtesy and kindness. He was repeatedly provoked into striking those who had taken liberties with him. All the sufferers, however, were wise enough to abstain from talking about their beatings, except Osborne, the most rapacious and brutal of booksellers, who proclaimed everywhere that he had been knocked down by the huge fellow whom he had hired to puff the Harleian Library.

About a year after Johnson had begun to reside in London, he was fortunate enough to obtain regular employment from Cave, an enterprising and intelligent bookseller, who was proprietor and editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. That journal, just entering on the ninth year of its long existence, was the only periodical work in the kingdom which then had what would now be called a large circulation. It was, indeed, the chief source of parliamentary intelligence. It was not then safe, even during a recess, to publish an account of the proceedings of either House without some disguise. Cave, however, ventured to entertain his readers with what he called Reports of the Debates of the Senate of Lilliput.

France was Blefuscu; London was Mildendo; pounds were sprugs; the Duke of Newcastle was the Nardac Secretary of State; Lord Hardwicke was the Hurgo Hickrad; and William Pulteney was Wingul Pulnub. To write the speeches was, during several years, the business of Johnson. He was generally furnished with notes, meagre, indeed, and inaccurate, of what had been said; but sometimes he had to find arguments and eloquence both for the ministry and for the opposition. He was himself a Tory, not from rational conviction,—for his serious opinion was that one form of government was just as good or as bad as another,—but from mere passion, such as inflamed the Capulets against the Montagues, or the Blues of the Roman circus against the Greens. In his infancy he had heard so much talk about the villanies of the Whigs, and the dangers of the Church, that he had become a furious partisan when he could scarcely speak. Before he was three he had insisted on being taken to hear Sacheverell preach at Lichfield Cathedral, and had listened to the sermon with as much respect, and probably with as much intelligence, as any Staffordshire squire in the congregation. The work which had been begun in the nursery had been completed by the university. Oxford, when Johnson resided there, was the most Jacobitical place in England; and Pembroke was one of the most Jacobitical colleges in Oxford. The preju

dices which he brought up to London were scarcely less absurd than those of his own "Tom Tempest." Charles II. and James II. were two of the best kings that ever reigned. Laud, a poor creature who never did, said, or wrote anything indicating more than the ordinary capacity of an old woman, was a prodigy of parts and learning over whose tomb Art and Genius still continued to weep. Hampden deserved no more honorable name than that of "the zealot of rebellion." Even the ship money, condemned not less decidedly by Falkland and Clarendon than by the bitterest Roundheads, Johnson would not pronounce to have been an unconstitutional impost. Under a government the mildest that had ever been known in the world—under a government which allowed to the people an unprecedented liberty of speech and action, he fancied that he was a slave; he assailed the ministry with obloquy which refuted itself, and regretted the lost freedom and happiness of those golden days in which a writer who had taken but one-tenth part of the license allowed to him, would have been pilloried, mangled with the shears, whipped at the cart's tail, and flung into a noisome dungeon to die. He hated dissenters and stock-jobbers, the excise and the army, septennial parliaments, and continental connections. He long had an aversion to the Scotch, an aversion of which he could not remember the commencement, but which, he

owned, had probably originated in his abhorrence of the conduct of the nation during the Great Rebellion. It is easy to guess in what manner debates on great party questions were likely to be reported by a man whose judgment was so much disordered by party spirit. A show of fairness was indeed necessary to the prosperity of the *Magazine*. But Johnson long afterwards owned that, though he had saved appearances, he had taken care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it; and, in fact, every passage which has lived, every passage which bears the marks of his higher faculties, is put into the mouth of some member of the opposition.

A few weeks after Johnson had entered on these obscure labors, he published a work which at once placed him high among the writers of his age. It is probable that what he had suffered during his first year in London had often reminded him of some parts of that noble poem in which Juvenal has described the misery and degradation of a needy man of letters, lodged among the pigeons' nests in the tottering garrets that overhung the streets of Rome. Pope's admirable imitations of Horace's "Satires" and "Epistles" had recently appeared, were in every hand, and were by many readers thought superior to the originals. What Pope had done for Horace, Johnson aspired to do for Juvenal. The enterprise was bold, and yet judicious. For

between Johnson and Juvenal there was much in common, much more certainly than between Pope and Horace.

Johnson's "London" appeared without his name in May, 1738. He received only ten guineas for this stately and vigorous poem; but the sale was rapid, and the success complete. A second edition was required within a week. Those small critics who are always desirous to lower established reputations ran about proclaiming that the anonymous satirist was superior to Pope in Pope's own peculiar department of literature. It ought to be remembered, to the honor of Pope, that he joined heartily in the applause with which the appearance of a rival genius was welcomed. He made inquiries about the author of "London." Such a man, he said, could not be long concealed. The name was soon discovered; and Pope, with great kindness, exerted himself to obtain an academical degree and the mastership of a grammar school for the poor young poet. The attempt failed, and Johnson remained a bookseller's hack.

It does not appear that these two men, the most eminent writer of the generation which was going out, and the most eminent writer of the generation which was coming in, ever saw each other. They lived in very different circles; one surrounded by dukes and earls, the other by starving pamphleteers and index-makers. Among

Johnson's associates at this time may be mentioned Boyse, who, when his shirts were pledged, scrawled Latin verses sitting up in bed with his arms through two holes in his blanket; who composed very respectable sacred poetry when he was sober, and who was at last run over by a hackney coach when he was drunk; Hoole, surnamed the metaphysical tailor, who, instead of attending to his measures, used to trace geometrical diagrams on the board where he sat cross-legged; and the penitent imposter, George Psalmanazar, who, after poring all day, in a humble lodging, on the folios of Jewish rabbis and Christian fathers, indulged himself at night with literary and theological conversation at an alehouse in the city. But the most remarkable of the persons with whom at this time Johnson consorted, was Richard Savage, an earl's son, a shoemaker's apprentice, who had seen life in all its forms, who had feasted among blue ribands in St. James's Square, and had lain with fifty pounds weight of irons on his legs in the condemned ward of Newgate. This man had, after many vicissitudes of fortune, sunk at last into abject and hopeless poverty. His pen had failed him. His patrons had been taken away by death, or estranged by the riotous profusion with which he squandered their bounty, and the ungrateful insolence with which he rejected their advice. He now lived by begging He dined on venison and champagne whenever he

had been so fortunate as to borrow a guinea. If his questing had been unsuccessful, he appeased the rage of hunger with some scraps of broken meat, and lay down to rest under the Piazza of Covent Garden in warm weather, and in cold weather as near as he could get to the furnace of a glass-house. Yet, in his misery, he was still an agreeable companion. He had an inexhaustible store of anecdotes about that gay and brilliant world from which he was now an outcast. He had observed the great men of both parties in hours of careless relaxation; had seen the leaders of opposition without the mask of patriotism; and had heard the prime minister roar with laughter, and tell stories not over decent. During some months Savage lived in the closest familiarity with Johnson; and then the friends parted, not without tears. Johnson remained in London to drudge for Cave. Savage went to the west of England; lived there as he had lived everywhere; and, in 1743, died, penniless and heart-broken, in Bristol jail.

Soon after his death, while the public curiosity was strongly excited about his extraordinary character, and his not less extraordinary adventures, a life of him appeared, widely different from the catchpenny lives of eminent men which were then a staple article of manufacture in Grub Street. The style was indeed deficient in ease and variety; and the writer was evidently too

partial to the Latin element of our language. But the little work, with all its faults, was a masterpiece. No finer specimen of literary biography existed in any language, living or dead; and a discerning critic might have confidently predicted that the author was destined to be the founder of a new school of English eloquence.

The "Life of Savage" was anonymous; but it was well known in literary circles that Johnson was the writer. During the three years which followed, he produced no important work; but he was not, and indeed could not be, idle. The fame of his abilities and learning continued to grow. Warburton pronounced him a man of parts and genius; and the praise of Warburton was then no light thing. Such was Johnson's reputation, that, in 1747, several eminent booksellers combined to employ him in the arduous work of preparing a Dictionary of the English Language in two folio volumes. The sum which they agreed to pay him was only fifteen hundred guineas; and out of this sum he had to pay several poor men of letters who assisted him in the humbler parts of his task.

The prospectus of the Dictionary he addressed to the Earl of Chesterfield. Chesterfield had long been celebrated for the politeness of his manners, the brilliancy of his wit, and the delicacy of his taste. He was acknowledged to be the finest speaker in the House of Lords. He had recently

governed Ireland, at a momentous conjuncture, with eminent firmness, wisdom, and humanity; and he had since become Secretary of State. He received Johnson's homage with the most winning affability, and requited it with a few guineas, bestowed doubtless in a very graceful manner, but was by no means desirous to see all his carpets blackened with the London mud, and his soups and wines thrown to right and left over the gowns of fine ladies and the waistcoats of fine gentlemen, by an absent, awkward scholar, who gave strange starts, and uttered strange growls, who dressed like a scarecrow, and ate like a cormorant. During some time Johnson continued to call on his patron; but, after being repeatedly told by the porter that his lordship was not at home, took the hint, and ceased to present himself at the inhospitable door.

Johnson had flattered himself that he should have completed his Dictionary by the end of 1750; but it was not till 1755 that he at length gave his huge volumes to the world. During the seven years which he passed in the drudgery of penning definitions and marking quotations for transcription, he sought for relaxation in literary labor of a more agreeable kind. In 1749 he published the "Vanity of Human Wishes," an excellent imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. It is, in truth, not easy to say whether the palm belongs to the ancient or to the modern poet.

The couplets in which the fall of Wolsey is described, though lofty and sonorous, are feeble when compared with the wonderful lines which bring before us all Rome in tumult on the day of the fall of Sejanus, the laurels on the doorposts, the white bull stalking towards the Capitol, the statues rolling down from their pedestals, the flatterers of the disgraced minister running to see him dragged with a hook through the streets, and to have a kick at his carcass before it is hurled into the Tiber. It must be owned, too, that in the concluding passage the Christian moralist has not made the most of his advantages, and has fallen decidedly short of the sublimity of his Pagan model. On the other hand, Juvenal's Hannibal must yield to Johnson's Charles; and Johnson's vigorous and pathetic enumeration of the miseries of a literary life must be allowed to be superior to Juvenal's lamentation over the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero.

For the copyright of the "Vanity of Human Wishes" Johnson received only fifteen guineas.

A few days after the publication of this poem, his tragedy, begun many years before, was brought on the stage. His pupil, David Garrick, had, in 1741, made his appearance on a humble stage in Goodman's Fields, had at once risen to the first place among actors, and was now, after several years of almost uninterrupted success, manager of Drury Lane Theatre. The relation between him

and his old preceptor was of a very singular kind. They repelled each other strongly, and yet attracted each other strongly. Nature had made them of very different clay; and circumstances had fully brought out the natural peculiarities of both. Sudden prosperity had turned Garrick's head. Continued adversity had soured Johnson's temper. Johnson saw, with more envy than became so great a man, the villa, the plate, the china, the Brussels carpet, which the little mimic had got by repeating, with grimaces and gesticulations, what wiser men had written; and the exquisitely sensitive vanity of Garrick was galled by the thought that, while all the rest of the world was applauding him, he could obtain from one morose cynic, whose opinion it was impossible to despise, scarcely any compliment not acidulated with scorn. Yet the two Lichfield men had so many early recollections in common, and sympathized with each other on so many points on which they sympathized with nobody else in the vast population of the capital, that, though the master was often provoked by the monkey-like impertinence of the pupil, and the pupil by the bearish rudeness of the master, they remained friends till they were parted by death. Garrick now brought "Irene" out, with alterations sufficient to displease the author, yet not sufficient to make the piece pleasing to the audience. The public, however, listened with little emotion, but

with much civility, to five acts of monotonous declamation. After nine representations the play was withdrawn. It is, indeed, altogether unsuited to the stage, and, even when perused in the closet, will be found hardly worthy of the author. He had not the slightest notion of what blank verse should be. A change in the last syllable of every other line would make the versification of the "Vanity of Human Wishes" closely resemble the versification of "Irene." The poet, however, cleared, by his benefit-nights, and by the sale of the copyright of his tragedy, about three hundred pounds, then a great sum in his estimation.

About a year after the representation of "Irene," he began to publish a series of short essays on morals, manners, and literature. This species of composition had been brought into fashion by the success of the *Tatler*, and by the still more brilliant success of the *Spectator*. A crowd of small writers had vainly attempted to rival Addison. The *Lay Monastery*, the *Censor*, the *Freethinker*, the *Plain Dealer*, the *Champion*, and other works of the same kind, had had their short day. None of them had obtained a permanent place in our literature; and they are now to be found only in the libraries of the curious. At length Johnson undertook the adventure in which so many aspirants had failed. In the thirty-sixth year after the appearance of the last number of the *Spec-*

tator, appeared the first number of the *Rambler*. From March 1750, to March 1752, this paper continued to come out every Tuesday and Saturday.

From the first the *Rambler* was enthusiastically admired by a few eminent men. Richardson, when only five numbers had appeared, pronounced it equal, if not superior, to the *Spectator*. Young and Hartley expressed their approbation not less warmly. Bubb Dodington, among whose many faults indifference to the claims of genius and learning cannot be reckoned, solicited the acquaintance of the writer. In consequence probably of the good offices of Dodington, who was then the confidential adviser of Prince Frederick, two of his Royal Highness's gentlemen carried a gracious message to the printing-office, and ordered seven copies for Leicester House. But these overtures seem to have been very coldly received. Johnson had had enough of the patronage of the great to last him all his life, and was not disposed to haunt any other door as he had haunted the door of Chesterfield.

By the public the *Rambler* was at first very coldly received. Though the price of a number was only twopence, the sale did not amount to five hundred. The profits were therefore very small. But as soon as the flying leaves were collected and reprinted they became popular. The author lived to see thirteen thousand copies

spread over England alone. Separate editions were published for the Scotch and Irish markets. A large party pronounced the style perfect, so absolutely perfect that in some essays it would be impossible for the writer himself to alter a single word for the better. Another party, not less numerous, vehemently accused him of having corrupted the purity of the English tongue. The best critics admitted that his diction was too monotonous, too obviously artificial, and now and then turgid even to absurdity. But they did justice to the acuteness of his observations on morals and manners, to the constant precision and frequent brilliancy of his language, to the weighty and magnificent eloquence of many serious passages and to the solemn yet pleasing humor of some of the lighter papers. On the question of precedence between Addison and Johnson, a question which, seventy years ago, was much disputed, posterity has pronounced a decision from which there is no appeal. Sir Roger, his chaplain and his butler, Will Wimble and Will Honeycomb, the Vision of Mirza, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Everlasting Club, the Dunmow Flitch, the Loves of Hilpah and Shalum, the Visit to the Exchange, and the Visit to the Abbey, are known to everybody. But many men and women, even of highly cultivated minds, are unacquainted with Squire Bluster and Mrs. Busy, Quisquilius and Venustulus, the

Allegory of Wit and Learning, the Chronicle of the Revolutions of a Garret, and the sad fate of Aningait and Ajut.

The last *Rambler* was written in a sad and gloomy hour. Mrs. Johnson had been given over by the physicians. Three days later she died. She left her husband almost broken-hearted. Many people had been surprised to see a man of his genius and learning stooping to every drudgery, and denying himself almost every comfort, for the purpose of supplying a silly, affected old woman with superfluities, which she accepted with but little gratitude. But all his affection had been concentrated on her. He had neither brother nor sister, neither son nor daughter. To him she was beautiful as the Gunnings, and witty as Lady Mary. Her opinion of his writings was more important to him than the voice of the pit of Drury Lane Theatre, or the judgment of the *Monthly Review*. The chief support which had sustained him through the most arduous labor of his life was the hope that she would enjoy the fame and the profit which he anticipated from his Dictionary. She was gone; and in that vast labyrinth of streets, peopled by eight hundred thousand human beings, he was alone. Yet it was necessary for him to set himself, as he expressed it, doggedly to work. After three more laborious years, the Dictionary was at length complete.

It had been generally supposed that this great work would be dedicated to the eloquent and accomplished nobleman to whom the Prospectus had been addressed. He well knew the value of such a compliment; and therefore, when the day of publication drew near, he exerted himself to soothe, by a show of zealous and at the same time of delicate and judicious kindness, the pride which he had so cruelly wounded. Since the *Ramblers* had ceased to appear, the town had been entertained by a journal called *The World*, to which many men of high rank and fashion contributed. In two successive numbers of *The World*, the Dictionary was, to use the modern phrase, puffed with wonderful skill. The writings of Johnson were warmly praised. It was proposed that he should be invested with the authority of a Dictator, nay, of a Pope, over our language, and that his decisions about the meaning and the spelling of words should be received as final. His two folios, it was said, would of course be bought by everybody who could afford to buy them. It was soon known that these papers were written by Chesterfield. But the just resentment of Johnson was not to be so appeased. In a letter written with singular energy and dignity of thought and language, he repelled the tardy advances of his patron. The Dictionary came forth without a dedication. In the preface the author truly declared that he owed

nothing to the great, and described the difficulties with which he had been left to struggle so forcibly and pathetically, that the ablest and most malevolent of all the enemies of his fame, Horne Tooke, never could read that passage without tears.

The public, on this occasion, did Johnson full justice, and something more than justice. The best lexicographer may well be content if his productions are received by the world with cold esteem. But Johnson's Dictionary was hailed with an enthusiasm such as no similar work has ever excited. It was, indeed, the first dictionary which could be read with pleasure. The definitions show so much acuteness of thought and command of language, and the passages quoted from poets, divines, and philosophers, are so skilfully selected, that a leisure hour may always be very agreeably spent in turning over the pages. The faults of the book resolve themselves, for the most part, into one great fault. Johnson was a wretched etymologist. He knew little or nothing of any Teutonic language except English, which, indeed, as he wrote it, was scarcely a Teutonic language; and thus he was absolutely at the mercy of Junius and Skinner.

The Dictionary, though it raised Johnson's fame, added nothing to his pecuniary means. The fifteen hundred guineas which the booksellers had agreed to pay him had been advanced and

spent before the last sheets issued from the press. It is painful to relate that, twice in the course of the year which followed the publication of this great work, he was arrested and carried to sponging-houses, and that he was twice indebted for his liberty to his excellent friend Richardson. It was still necessary for the man who had been formally saluted by the highest authority as Dictator of the English language to supply his wants by constant toil. He abridged his Dictionary. He proposed to bring out an edition of Shakespeare by subscription; and many subscribers sent in their names, and laid down their money. But he soon found the task so little to his taste, that he turned to more attractive employments. He contributed many papers to a new monthly journal, which was called the *Literary Magazine*. Few of these papers have much interest; but among them was the very best thing that he ever wrote, a masterpiece both of reasoning and of satirical pleasantry, the review of Jenyns's "Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil."

In the spring of 1758 Johnson put forth the first of a series of essays, entitled the *Idler*. During two years these essays continued to appear weekly. They were eagerly read, widely circulated, and, indeed, impudently pirated, while they were still in the original form, and had a large sale when collected into volumes. The *Idler* may be described as a second part of the *Rambler*.

somewhat livelier and somewhat weaker than the first part.

While Johnson was busied with his *Idlers*, his mother, who had accomplished her ninetieth year, died at Lichfield. It was long since he had seen her; but he had not failed to contribute largely, out of his small means, to her comfort. In order to defray the charges of her funeral, and to pay some debts which she had left, he wrote a little book in a single week, and sent off the sheets to the press without reading them over. A hundred pounds were paid him for the copyright; and the purchasers had great cause to be pleased with their bargain, for the book was "Rasselas."

The success of "Rasselas" was great, though such ladies as Miss Lydia Languish must have been grievously disappointed when they found that the new volume from the circulating library was little more than a dissertation on the author's favorite theme, the Vanity of Human Wishes; that the Prince of Abyssinia was without a mistress, and the Princess without a lover; and that the story set the hero and the heroine down exactly where it had taken them up. The style was the subject of much eager controversy. The *Monthly Review* and the *Critical Review* took different sides. Many readers pronounced the writer a pompous pedant, who would never use a word of two syllables where it was possible to use

a word of six, and who could not make a waiting-woman relate her adventures without balancing every noun with another noun, and every epithet with another epithet. Another party, not less zealous, cited with delight numerous passages in which weighty meaning was expressed with accuracy and illustrated with splendor. And both the censure and the praise were merited.

About the plan of "Rasselas" little was said by the critics; and yet the faults of the plan might seem to invite severe criticism. Johnson has frequently blamed Shakespeare for neglecting the proprieties of time and place, and for ascribing to one age or nation the manners and opinions of another. Yet Shakespeare has not sinned in this way more grievously than Johnson. Rasselas and Imlac, Nekayah and Pekuah, are evidently meant to be Abyssinians of the eighteenth century—for the Europe which Imlac describes is the Europe of the eighteenth century—and the inmates of the Happy Valley talk familiarly of that law of gravitation which Newton discovered, and which was not fully received even at Cambridge till the eighteenth century. What a real company of Abyssinians would have been may be learned from "Bruce's Travels." But Johnson, not content with turning filthy savages, ignorant of their letters, and gorged with raw steaks cut from living cows, into philosophers as eloquent and enlightened as himself or his friend Burke,

and into ladies as highly accomplished as Mrs. Lennox or Mrs. Sheridan, transferred the whole domestic system of England to Egypt. Into a land of harems, a land of polygamy, a land where women are married without ever being seen, he introduced the flirtations and jealousies of our ballrooms. In a land where there is boundless liberty of divorce, wedlock is described as the indissoluble compact. "A youth and maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home and dream of each other. Such," says Rasselas, "is the common process of marriage." Such it may have been, and may still be, in London, but assuredly not at Cairo. A writer who was guilty of such improprieties had little right to blame the poet who made Hector quote Aristotle, and represented Julio Romano as flourishing in the days of the oracle of Delphi.

By such exertions as have been described, Johnson supported himself till the year 1762. In that year a great change in his circumstances took place. He had from a child been an enemy of the reigning dynasty. His Jacobite prejudices had been exhibited with little disguise both in his works and in his conversation. Even in his massy and elaborate Dictionary he had, with a strange want of taste and judgment, inserted bitter and contumelious reflections on the Whig party. The excise, which was a favorite resource of Whig

financiers, he had designated as a hateful tax. He had railed against the commissioners of excise in language so coarse that they had seriously thought of prosecuting him. He had with difficulty been prevented from holding up the Lord Privy Seal by name as an example of the meaning of the word "renegade." A pension he had defined as pay given to a state hireling to betray his country; a pensioner as a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey a master. It seemed unlikely that the author of these definitions would himself be pensioned. But that was a time of wonders. George the Third had ascended the throne; and had, in the course of a few months, disgusted many of the old friends, and conciliated many of the old enemies of his house. The city was becoming mutinous; Oxford was becoming loyal. Cavendishes and Bentincks were murmuring. Somersets and Wyndhams were hastening to kiss hands. The head of the treasury was now Lord Bute, who was a Tory, and could have no objection to Johnson's Toryism. Bute wished to be thought a patron of men of letters; and Johnson was one of the most eminent and one of the most needy men of letters in Europe. A pension of three hundred a year was graciously offered, and with very little hesitation accepted.

This event produced a change in Johnson's whole way of life. For the first time since his boyhood he no longer felt the daily goad urging

him to the daily toil. He was at liberty, after thirty years of anxiety and drudgery, to indulge his constitutional indolence; to lie in bed till two in the afternoon, and to sit up talking till four in the morning, without fearing either the printer's devil or the sheriff's officer.

One laborious task indeed he had bound himself to perform. He had received large subscriptions for his promised edition of Shakespeare; he had lived on those subscriptions during some years: and he could not without disgrace omit to perform his part of the contract. His friends repeatedly exhorted him to make an effort; and he repeatedly resolved to do so. But, notwithstanding their exhortations and his resolutions, month followed month, year followed year, and nothing was done. He prayed fervently against his idleness. He determined, as often as he received the sacrament, that he would no longer doze away and trifle away his time; but the spell under which he lay resisted prayer and sacrament. His private notes at this time are made up of self-reproaches. "My indolence," he wrote on Easter Eve in 1764, "has sunk into grosser sluggishness. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year." Easter, 1765, came, and found him still in the same state. "My time," he wrote, "has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. My memory grows

confused, and I know not how the days pass over me." Happily for his honor, the charm which held him captive was at length broken by no gentle or friendly hand. He had been weak enough to pay serious attention to a story about a ghost which haunted a house in Cock Lane, and had actually gone himself, with some of his friends, at one in the morning, to St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, in the hope of receiving a communication from the perturbed spirit. But the spirit, though adjured with all solemnity, remained obstinately silent; and it soon appeared that a naughty girl of eleven had been amusing herself by making fools of so many philosophers. Churchill, who, confident in his powers, drunk with popularity and burning with party spirit, was looking for some man of established fame and Tory politics to insult, celebrated the Cock Lane Ghost in three cantos, nicknamed Johnson "Pomposo," asked where the book was which had been so long promised and so liberally paid for, and directly accused the great moralist of cheating. This terrible word proved effectual; and in October, 1765, appeared, after a delay of nine years, the new edition of Shakespeare.

This publication saved Johnson's character for honesty, but added nothing to the fame of his abilities and learning. The preface, though it contains some good passages, is not in his best manner. The most valuable notes are those in

which he had an opportunity of showing how attentively he had during many years observed human life and human nature. The best specimen is the note on the character of Polonius. Nothing so good is to be found even in Wilhelm Meister's admirable examination of "Hamlet." But here praise must end. It would be difficult to name a more slovenly, a more worthless, edition of any great classic. The reader may turn over play after play without finding one happy conjectural emendation, or one ingenious and satisfactory explanation of a passage which had baffled preceding commentators. Johnson had, in his Prospectus, told the world that he was peculiarly fitted for the task which he had undertaken, because he had, as a lexicographer, been under the necessity of taking a wider view of the English language than any of his predecessors. That his knowledge of our literature was extensive, is indisputable. But, unfortunately, he had altogether neglected that very part of our literature with which it is especially desirable that an editor of Shakespeare should be conversant. It is dangerous to assert a negative. Yet little will be risked by the assertion, that in the two folio volumes of the English Dictionary there is not a single passage quoted from any dramatist of the Elizabethan age, except Shakespeare and Ben. Even from Ben the quotations are few. Johnson might easily, in a few months, have made himself

well acquainted with every old play that was extant. But it never seems to have occurred to him that this was a necessary preparation for the work which he had undertaken. He would doubtless have admitted that it would be the height of absurdity in a man who was not familiar with the works of Aeschylus and Euripides to publish an edition of Sophocles. Yet he ventured to publish an edition of Shakespeare, without having ever in his life, as far as can be discovered, read a single scene of Massinger, Ford, Decker, Webster, Marlowe, Beaumont, or Fletcher. His detractors were noisy and scurrilous. Those who most loved and honored him had little to say in praise of the manner in which he had discharged the duty of a commentator. He had, however, acquitted himself of a debt which had long lain heavy on his conscience, and he sank back into the repose from which the sting of satire had roused him. He long continued to live upon the fame which he had already won. He was honored by the University of Oxford with a Doctor's degree, by the Royal Academy with a professorship, and by the King with an interview, in which his Majesty most graciously expressed a hope that so excellent a writer would not cease to write. In the interval, however, between 1765 and 1775, Johnson published only two or three political tracts, the longest of which he could have produced in forty-eight hours, if he had

worked as he worked on the "Life of Savage" and on "Rasselas."

But though his pen was now idle his tongue was active. The influence exercised by his conversation, directly upon those with whom he lived, and indirectly on the whole literary world, was altogether without a parallel. His colloquial talents were, indeed, of the highest order. He had strong sense, quick discernment, wit, humor, immense knowledge of literature and of life, and an infinite store of curious anecdotes. As respected style, he spoke far better than he wrote. Every sentence which dropped from his lips was as correct in structure as the most nicely balanced period of the *Rambler*. But in his talk there were no pompous triads, and little more than a fair proportion of words in *osity* and *ation*. All was simplicity, ease, and vigor. He uttered his short, weighty, and pointed sentences with a power of voice, and a justness and energy of emphasis, of which the effect was rather increased than diminished by the rollings of his huge form, and by the asthmatic gaspings and puffings in which the peals of his eloquence generally ended. Nor did the laziness which made him unwilling to sit down to his desk prevent him from giving instruction or entertainment orally. To discuss questions of taste, of learning, of casuistry, in language so exact and so forcible that it might have been printed without

the alteration of a word, was to him no exertion, but a pleasure. He loved, as he said, to fold his legs and have his talk out. He was ready to bestow the overflowings of his full mind on anybody who would start a subject; on a fellow-passenger in a stage-coach, or on the person who sat at the same table with him in an eating-house. But his conversation was nowhere so brilliant and striking as when he was surrounded by a few friends, whose abilities and knowledge enabled them, as he once expressed it, to send him back every ball that he threw. Some of these, in 1764, formed themselves into a club, which gradually became a formidable power in the commonwealth of letters. The verdicts pronounced by this conclave on new books were speedily known over all London, and were sufficient to sell off a whole edition in a day, or to condemn the sheets to the service of the trunkmaker and the pastrycook. Nor shall we think this strange when we consider what great and various talents and acquirements met in the little fraternity. Goldsmith was the representative of poetry and light literature, Reynolds of the arts, Burke of political eloquence and political philosophy. There, too, were Gibbon, the greatest historian, and Jones the greatest linguist, of the age. Garrick brought to the meetings his inexhaustible pleasantry, his incomparable mimicry, and his consummate knowledge of stage effect. Among the most con-

stant attendants were two high-born and high-bred gentlemen, closely bound together by friendship, but of widely different characters and habits, —Bennet Langton, distinguished by his skill in Greek literature, by the orthodoxy of his opinions, and by the sanctity of his life; and Topham Beauclerk, renowned for his amours, his knowledge of the gay world, his fastidious taste, and his sarcastic wit. To predominate over such a society was not easy. Yet even over such a society Johnson predominated. Burke might, indeed, have disputed the supremacy to which others were under the necessity of submitting. But Burke, though not generally a very patient listener, was content to take the second part when Johnson was present; and the club itself, consisting of so many eminent men, is to this day popularly designated as Johnson's Club.

Among the members of this celebrated body was one to whom it has owed the greater part of its celebrity, yet who was regarded with little respect by his brethren, and had not without difficulty obtained a seat among them. This was James Boswell, a young Scotch lawyer, heir to an honorable name and a fair estate. That he was a coxcomb and a bore, weak, vain, pushing, curious, garrulous, was obvious to all who were acquainted with him. That he could not reason, that he had no wit, no humor, no eloquence, is apparent from his writings. And yet his writings are read

beyond the Mississippi, and under the Southern Cross, and are likely to be read as long as the English exists, either as a living or as a dead language. Nature had made him a slave and an idolater. His mind resembled those creepers which the botanists call parasites, and which can subsist only by clinging round the stems and imbibing the juices of stronger plants. He must have fastened himself on somebody. He might have fastened himself on Wilkes, and have become the fiercest patriot in the Bill of Rights Society. He might have fastened himself on Whitefield, and have become the loudest field preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. In a happy hour he fastened himself on Johnson. The pair might seem ill matched. For Johnson had early been prejudiced against Boswell's country. To a man of Johnson's strong understanding and irritable temper, the silly egotism and adulation of Boswell must have been as teasing as the constant buzz of a fly. Johnson hated to be questioned; and Boswell was eternally catechizing him on all kinds of subjects, and sometimes propounded such questions as, "What would you do, sir, if you were locked up in a tower with a baby?" Johnson was a water-drinker, and Boswell was a winebibber, and indeed little better than an habitual sot. It was impossible that there should be perfect harmony between two such companions. Indeed, the great man was sometimes provoked into fits

of passion, in which he said things which the small man, during a few hours, seriously resented. Every quarrel, however, was soon made up. During twenty years the disciple continued to worship the master; the master continued to scold the disciple, to sneer at him, and to love him. The two friends ordinarily resided at a great distance from each other. Boswell practised in the Parliament House of Edinburgh, and could pay only occasional visits to London. During those visits his chief business was to watch Johnson, to discover all Johnson's habits, to turn the conversation to subjects about which Johnson was likely to say something remarkable, and to fill quarto note-books with minutes of what Johnson had said. In this way were gathered the materials, out of which was afterwards constructed the most interesting biographical work in the world.

Soon after the club began to exist, Johnson formed a connection less important indeed to his fame, but much more important to his happiness, than his connection with Boswell. Henry Thrale, one of the most opulent brewers in the kingdom, a man of sound and cultivated understanding, rigid principles, and liberal spirit, was married to one of those clever, kind-hearted, engaging, vain, pert young women, who are perpetually doing or saying what is not exactly right, but who, do or say what they may, are always agreeable. In 1765 the Thrales became acquainted with Johnson, and

the acquaintance ripened fast into friendship. They were astonished and delighted by the brilliancy of his conversation. They were flattered by finding that a man so widely celebrated preferred their house to any other in London. Even the peculiarities which seemed to unfit him for civilized society,—his gesticulations, his rollings, his puffings, his mutterings, the strange way in which he put on his clothes, the ravenous eagerness with which he devoured his dinner, his fits of melancholy, his fits of anger, his frequent rudeness, his occasional ferocity,—increased the interest which his new associates took in him. For these things were the cruel marks left behind by a life which had been one long conflict with disease and adversity. In a vulgar hack writer, such oddities would have excited only disgust. But in a man of genius, learning, and virtue, their effect was to add pity to admiration and esteem. Johnson soon had an apartment at the brewery in Southwark, and a still more pleasant apartment at the villa of his friends on Streatham Common. A large part of every year he passed in those abodes—abodes which must have seemed magnificent and luxurious indeed, when compared with the dens in which he had generally been lodged. But his chief pleasures were derived from what the astronomer of his Abyssinian tale called "the endearing elegance of female friendship." Mrs. Thrale rallied him, soothed him, coaxed him;

and, if she sometimes provoked him by her flippancy, made ample amends by listening to his reproofs with angelic sweetness of temper. When he was diseased in body and in mind, she was the most tender of nurses. No comfort that wealth could purchase, no contrivance that womanly ingenuity, set to work by womanly compassion, could devise, was wanting to his sick-room. He requited her kindness by an affection pure as the affection of a father, yet delicately tinged with a gallantry which, though awkward, must have been more flattering than the attentions of a crowd of the fools who gloried in the names, now obsolete, of Buck and Maccaroni. It should seem that a full half of Johnson's life, during about sixteen years, was passed under the roof of the Thrales. He accompanied the family sometimes to Bath, and sometimes to Brighton, once to Wales, and once to Paris. But he had at the same time a house in one of the narrow and gloomy courts on the north of Fleet Street. In the garrets was his library, a large and miscellaneous collection of books, falling to pieces and begrimed with dust. On a lower floor he sometimes, but very rarely, regaled a friend with a plain dinner,—a veal pie, or a leg of lamb and spinach, and a rice pudding. Nor was the dwelling uninhabited during his long absences. It was the home of the most extraordinary assemblage of inmates that ever was brought together. At

the head of the establishment Johnson had placed an old lady named Williams, whose chief recommendations were her blindness and her poverty. But, in spite of her murmurs and reproaches, he gave an asylum to another lady who was as poor as herself, Mrs. Desmoulins, whose family he had known many years before in Staffordshire. Room was found for the daughter of Mrs. Desmoulins, and for another destitute damsel, who was generally addressed as Miss Carmichael, but whom her generous host called Polly. An old quack doctor named Levett, who bled and dosed coal-heavers and hackney coachmen, and received for fees crusts of bread, bits of bacon, glasses of gin, and sometimes a little copper, completed this strange menagerie. All these poor creatures were at constant war with each other, and with Johnson's negro servant Frank. Sometimes, indeed, they transferred their hostilities from the servant to the master, complained that a better table was not kept for them, and railed or maundered till their benefactor was glad to make his escape to Streatham, or to the Mitre Tavern. And yet he, who was generally the haughtiest and most irritable of mankind, who was but too prompt to resent anything which looked like a slight on the part of a purse-proud bookseller, or of a noble and powerful patron, bore patiently from mendicants, who, but for his bounty, must have gone to the workhouse, insults more provoking than those for

which he had knocked down Osborne and bidden defiance to Chesterfield. Year after year Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins, Polly and Levett, continued to torment him and to live upon him.

The course of life which has been described was interrupted in Johnson's sixty-fourth year by an important event. He had early read an account of the Hebrides, and had been much interested by learning that there was so near him a land peopled by a race which was still as rude and simple as in the Middle Ages. A wish to become intimately acquainted with a state of society so utterly unlike all that he had ever seen frequently crossed his mind. But it is not probable that his curiosity would have overcome his habitual sluggishness, and his love of the smoke, the mud, and the cries of London, had not Boswell importuned him to attempt the adventure, and offered to be his squire. At length, in August, 1773, Johnson crossed the Highland line, and plunged courageously into what was then considered, by most Englishmen, as a dreary and perilous wilderness. After wandering about two months through the Celtic region, sometimes in rude boats which did not protect him from the rain, and sometimes on small shaggy ponies which could hardly bear his weight, he returned to his old haunts with a mind full of new images and new theories. During the following year he employed himself in recording his adventures. About the beginning of 1775 his

"Journey to the Hebrides" was published, and was, during some weeks, the chief subject of conversation in all circles in which any attention was paid to literature. The book is still read with pleasure. The narrative is entertaining; the speculations, whether sound or unsound, are always ingenious; and the style, though too stiff and pompous, is somewhat easier and more graceful than that of his early writings. His prejudice against the Scotch had at length become little more than matter of jest; and whatever remained of the old feeling had been effectually removed by the kind and respectful hospitality with which he had been received in every part of Scotland. It was, of course, not to be expected that an Oxonian Tory should praise the Presbyterian polity and ritual, or that an eye accustomed to the hedgerows and parks of England should not be struck by the bareness of Berwickshire and East Lothian. But even in censure Johnson's tone is not unfriendly. The most enlightened Scotchmen, with Lord Mansfield at their head, were well pleased. But some foolish and ignorant Scotchmen were moved to anger by a little unpalatable truth, which was mingled with much eulogy, and assailed him whom they chose to consider as the enemy of their country with libels much more dishonorable to their country than anything that he had ever said or written. They published paragraphs in the newspapers, articles in the

magazines, sixpenny pamphlets, five-shilling books. One scribbler abused Johnson for being blear-eyed; another for being a pensioner; a third informed the world that one of the Doctor's uncles had been convicted of felony in Scotland, and had found that there was in that country one tree capable of supporting the weight of an Englishman. Macpherson, whose "Fingal" had been proved in the "Journey" to be an impudent forgery, threatened to take vengeance with a cane. The only effect of this threat was that Johnson reiterated the charge of forgery in the most contemptuous terms, and walked about, during some time, with a cudgel, which, if the impostor had not been too wise to encounter it, would assuredly have descended upon him, to borrow the sublime language of his own epic poem, "like a hammer on the red son of the furnace."

Of other assailants Johnson took no notice whatever. He had early resolved never to be drawn into controversy; and he adhered to his resolution with a steadfastness which is the more extraordinary, because he was, both intellectually and morally, of the stuff of which controversialists are made. In conversation, he was a singularly eager, acute, and pertinacious disputant. When at a loss for good reasons, he had recourse to sophistry; and when heated by altercation, he made unsparing use of sarcasm and invective. But when he took his pen in his hand, his whole

character seemed to be changed. A hundred bad writers misrepresented him and reviled him; but not one of the hundred could boast of having been thought by him worthy of a refutation, or even of a retort. The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNicols, and Hendersons, did their best to annoy him, in the hope that he would give them importance by answering them. But the reader will in vain search his works for any allusion to Kenrick or Campbell, to MacNicol or Henderson. One Scotchman, bent on vindicating the fame of Scotch learning, defied him to the combat in a detestable Latin hexameter:—

Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum.

But Johnson took no notice of the challenge. He had learned, both from his own observation and from literary history, in which he was deeply read, that the place of books in the public estimation is fixed, not by what is written about them, but by what is written in them; and that an author whose works are likely to live is very unwise if he stoops to wrangle with detractors whose works are certain to die. He always maintained that fame was a shuttlecock which could be kept up only by being beaten back, as well as beaten forward, and which would soon fall if there were only one battledore. No saying was oftener in his mouth than that fine apophthegm of Bentley, that no man was ever written down but by himself.

Unhappily, a few months after the appearance of the "Journey to the Hebrides" Johnson did what none of his envious assailants could have done, and to a certain extent succeeded in writing himself down. The disputes between England and her American colonies had reached a point at which no amicable adjustment was possible. Civil war was evidently impending; and the ministers seem to have thought that the eloquence of Johnson might with advantage be employed to inflame the nation against the opposition here, and against the rebels beyond the Atlantic. He had already written two or three tracts in defence of the foreign and domestic policy of the government; and those tracts, though hardly worthy of him, were much superior to the crowd of pamphlets which lay on the counters of Almon and Stockdale. But his "Taxation No Tyranny" was a pitiable failure. The very title was a silly phrase, which can have been recommended to his choice by nothing but a jingling alliteration which he ought to have despised. The arguments were such as boys use in debating societies. The pleasantry was as awkward as the gambols of a hippopotamus. Even Boswell was forced to own that, in this unfortunate piece, he could detect no trace of his master's powers. The general opinion was that the strong faculties which had produced the Dictionary and the *Rambler* were beginning to feel the effect of time and of disease,

and that the old man would best consult his credit by writing no more.

But this was a great mistake. Johnson had failed, not because his mind was less vigorous than when he wrote "Rasselas" in the evenings of a week, but because he had foolishly chosen, or suffered others to choose for him, a subject such as he would at no time have been competent to treat. He was in no sense a statesman. He never willingly read or thought or talked about affairs of state. He loved biography, literary history, the history of manners; but political history was positively distasteful to him. The question at issue between the colonies and the mother country was a question about which he had really nothing to say. He failed, therefore, as the greatest men must fail when they attempt to do that for which they are unfit; as Burke would have failed if Burke had tried to write comedies like those of Sheridan; as Reynolds would have failed if Reynolds had tried to paint landscapes like those of Wilson. Happily, Johnson soon had an opportunity of proving most signally that his failure was not to be ascribed to intellectual decay.

On Easter Eve, 1777, some persons, deputed by a meeting which consisted of forty of the first booksellers in London, called upon him. Though he had some scruples about doing business at that season, he received his visitors with much civility.

They came to inform him that a new edition of the English poets, from Cowley downwards, was in contemplation, and to ask him to furnish short biographical prefaces. He readily undertook the task,—a task for which he was pre-eminently qualified. His knowledge of the literary history of England since the Restoration was unrivalled. That knowledge he had derived partly from books, and partly from sources which had long been closed,—from old Grub Street traditions; from the talk of forgotten poetasters and pamphleteers who had long been lying in parish vaults; from the recollections of such men as Gilbert Walmesley, who had conversed with the wits of Button; Cibber, who had mutilated the plays of two generations of dramatists; Orrery, who had been admitted to the society of Swift; and Savage, who had rendered services of no very honorable kind to Pope. The biographer therefore sat down to his task with a mind full of matter. He had at first intended to give only a paragraph to every minor poet, and only four or five pages to the greatest name. But the flood of anecdote and criticism overflowed the narrow channel. The work, which was originally meant to consist only of a few sheets, swelled into ten volumes,—small volumes, it is true, and not closely printed. The first four appeared in 1779, the remaining six in 1781.

The "Lives of the Poets" are, on the whole,

the best of Johnson's works. The narratives are as entertaining as any novel. The remarks on life and on human nature are eminently shrewd and profound. The criticisms are often excellent, and, even when grossly and provokingly unjust, well deserve to be studied. For, however erroneous they may be, they are never silly. They are the judgments of a mind trammelled by prejudice and deficient in sensibility, but vigorous and acute. They therefore generally contain a portion of valuable truth which deserves to be separated from the alloy; and, at the very worst, they mean something, a praise to which much of what is called criticism in our time has no pretensions.

Savage's "Life" Johnson reprinted nearly as it had appeared in 1744. Whoever, after reading that life, will turn to the other lives, will be struck by the difference of style. Since Johnson had been at ease in his circumstances he had written little and talked much. When, therefore, he, after the lapse of years, resumed his pen, the mannerism which he had contracted while he was in the constant habit of elaborate composition, was less perceptible than formerly; and his diction frequently had a colloquial ease which it had formerly wanted. The improvement may be discerned by a skilful critic in the "Journey to the Hebrides," and in the "Lives of the Poets" is so obvious that it cannot escape the notice of the most careless reader.

Among the lives the best are perhaps those of Cowley, Dryden, and Pope. The very worst is, beyond all doubt, that of Gray.

This great work at once became popular. There was, indeed, much just and much unjust censure; but even those who were loudest in blame were attracted by the book in spite of themselves. Malone computed the gains of the publishers at five or six thousand pounds. But the writer was very poorly remunerated. Intending at first to write very short prefaces, he had stipulated for only two hundred guineas. The booksellers, when they saw how far his performance had surpassed his promise, added only another hundred. Indeed, Johnson, though he did not despise, or affect to despise, money, and though his strong sense and long experience ought to have qualified him to protect his own interests, seems to have been singularly unskilful and unlucky in his literary bargains. He was generally reputed the first English writer of his time. Yet several writers of his time sold their copyrights for sums such as he never ventured to ask. To give a single instance, Robertson received four thousand five hundred pounds for the "History of Charles V."; and it is no disrespect to the memory of Robertson to say that the "History of Charles V." is both a less valuable and a less amusing book than the "Lives of the Poets."

Johnson was now in his seventy-second year.

The infirmities of age were coming fast upon him. That inevitable event of which he never thought without horror was brought near to him; and his whole life was darkened by the shadow of death. He had often to pay the cruel price of longevity. Every year he lost what could never be replaced. The strange dependants to whom he had given shelter, and to whom, in spite of their faults, he was strongly attached by habit, dropped off one by one; and, in the silence of his home, he regretted even the noise of their scolding matches. The kind and generous Thrale was no more; and it would have been well if his wife had been laid beside him. But she survived to be the laughing-stock of those who had envied her, and to draw from the eyes of the old man who had loved her beyond anything in the world, tears far more bitter than he would have shed over her grave. With some estimable and many agreeable qualities, she was not made to be independent. The control of a mind more steadfast than her own was necessary to her respectability. While she was restrained by her husband, a man of sense and firmness, indulgent to her taste in trifles, but always the undisputed master of his house, her worst offences had been impertinent jokes, white lies, and short fits of pettishness, ending in sunny good-humor. But he was gone; and she was left an opulent widow of forty, with strong sensibility, volatile fancy, and slender judgment. She soon

fell in love with a music-master from Brescia, in whom nobody but herself could discover anything to admire. Her pride, and perhaps some better feelings, struggled hard against this degrading passion. But the struggle irritated her nerves, soured her temper, and at length endangered her health. Conscious that her choice was one which Johnson could not approve, she became desirous to escape from his inspection. Her manner towards him changed. She was sometimes cold and sometimes petulant. She did not conceal her joy when he left Streatham; she never pressed him to return; and, if he came unbidden, she received him in a manner which convinced him that he was no longer a welcome guest. He took the very intelligible hints which she gave. He read, for the last time, a chapter of the Greek Testament in the library which had been formed by himself. In a solemn and tender prayer he commended the house and its inmates to the Divine protection, and, with emotions which choked his voice and convulsed his powerful frame, left forever that beloved home for the gloomy and desolate house behind Fleet Street, where the few and evil days which still remained to him were to run out. Here, in June, 1783, he had a paralytic stroke, from which, however, he recovered, and which does not appear to have at all impaired his intellectual faculties. But other maladies came thick upon him. His asthma

tormented him day and night. Dropsical symptoms made their appearance. While sinking under a complication of diseases, he heard that the woman whose friendship had been the chief happiness of sixteen years of his life had married an Italian fiddler; that all London was crying shame upon her; and that the newspapers and magazines were filled with allusions to the Ephesian matron and the two pictures in "Hamlet." He vehemently said that he would try to forget her existence. He never uttered her name. Every memorial of her which met his eye he flung into the fire. She meanwhile fled from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen and countrywomen to a land where she was unknown, hastened across Mount Cenis, and learned, while passing a merry Christmas of concerts and lemonade parties at Milan, that the great man with whose name hers is inseparably associated, had ceased to exist.

He had, in spite of much mental and much bodily affliction, clung vehemently to life. The feeling described in that fine but gloomy paper which closes the series of his *Idlers*, seemed to grow stronger in him as his last hour drew near. He fancied that he should be able to draw his breath more easily in a southern climate, and would probably have set out for Rome and Naples but for his fear of the expense of the journey. That expense, indeed, he had the means of defraying; for he had laid up about two thousand pounds,

the fruit of labors which had made the fortune of several publishers. But he was unwilling to break in upon this hoard, and he seems to have wished even to keep its existence a secret. Some of his friends hoped that the government might be induced to increase his pension to six hundred pounds a year; but this hope was disappointed, and he resolved to stand one English winter more. That winter was his last. His legs grew weaker; his breath grew shorter; the fatal water gathered fast, in spite of incisions which he, courageous against pain, but timid against death, urged his surgeons to make deeper and deeper. Though the tender care which had mitigated his sufferings during months of sickness at Streatham was withdrawn, he was not left desolate. The ablest physicians and surgeons attended him, and refused to accept fees from him. Burke parted from him with deep emotion. Windham sat much in the sick-room, arranged the pillows, and sent his own servant to watch at night by the bed. Frances Burney, whom the old man had cherished with fatherly kindness, stood weeping at the door; while Langton, whose piety eminently qualified him to be an adviser and comforter at such a time, received the last pressure of his friend's hand within. When at length the moment, dreaded through so many years, came close, the dark cloud passed away from Johnson's mind. His temper became unusually patient and

gentle; he ceased to think with terror of death, and of that which lies beyond death; and he spoke much of the mercy of God, and of the propitiation of Christ. In this serene frame of mind he died on the 13th of December, 1784. He was laid, a week later, in Westminster Abbey, among the eminent men of whom he had been the historian,—Cowley and Denham, Dryden and Congreve, Gay, Prior, and Addison.

Since his death, the popularity of his works—the "Lives of the Poets," and, perhaps, the "Vanity of Human Wishes," excepted—has greatly diminished. His Dictionary has been altered by editors till it can scarcely be called his. An allusion to his *Rambler* or his *Idler* is not readily apprehended in literary circles. The fame even of "Rasselas" has grown somewhat dim. But though the celebrity of the writings may have declined, the celebrity of the writer, strange to say, is as great as ever. Boswell's book has done for him more than the best of his own books could do. The memory of other authors is kept alive by their works. But the memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive. The old philosopher is still among us in the brown coat with the metal buttons, and the shirt which ought to be at wash, blinking, puffing, rolling his head, drumming with his fingers, tearing his meat like a tiger, and swallowing his tea in oceans. No human being who has been more than seventy

years in the grave is so well known to us. And it is but just to say that our intimate acquaintance with what he would himself have called the anfractuosities of his intellect and of his temper, serves only to strengthen our conviction that he was both a great and a good man.

NOTES.

Although these notes are critical, they include few questions in regard to Macaulay's structure and style. It is deemed that the Introduction affords a sufficient starting-point for studies in that direction. Explanations of names, etc., must be sought in the Glossary.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADDISON

Of the thirty-six essays contributed by Macaulay to the *Edinburgh Review*, this was the thirty-fourth. It appeared in July, 1843, and represents him at the maturity of his powers. It cannot quite rank, however, with such essays as those on Clive and Hastings, because the author is not so much at home in criticism as in history. It will be profitable to read in connection with it the essays upon Addison by Johnson (*Lives of the Poets*) and Thackeray (*English Humorists*). Mr. Courthope's *Life of Addison*, in the English Men of Letters series, should be read, if possible, if only to correct some of the mistakes or exaggerations of Macaulay's essay. Perhaps, too, in order to avoid carrying away from the prolonged study of one man a false estimate of his importance, it will be well to keep in mind the words written by a late critic, Mr. Gosse, in his *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*: "With some modification, what has been said of Addison may be repeated of Steele, whose fame has been steadily growing while the exaggerated reputation of Addison has been declining." "The time has probably gone by when either Addison or Steele could be placed at the summit of the literary life of their time. Swift and Pope, each in his own way, distinctly surpassed them.

47: 24. *Abject idolatry.* This is still another reference to what Macaulay elsewhere calls Boswellism, or disease of admiration. How near he comes to falling himself a victim

to it in the present essay, the reader must not fail to judge.

53: 29. *His knowledge of Greek.* Note just what is said, and do not get the idea that Addison knew no Greek. Macaulay has a way of making his sentences seem to say more than is in their words.

56: 10. *Evidences of Christianity.* The essay is entitled "Of the Christian Religion." Gibbon had long before brought the same charge of superficiality against the essay.

56: 21. *Moved the senate to admit.* This is either one of Macaulay's exaggerations or else "moved the senate" must be understood in a strictly parliamentary sense. What Addison wrote ("Of the Christian Religion," i. 7) is this: "Tertullian . . . tells . . . that the Emperor Tiberius, having received an account out of Palestine in Syria of the Divine Person who had appeared in that country, paid him a particular regard, and threatened to punish any who should accuse the Christians; nay, that the emperor would have adopted him among the deities whom they worshipped, had not the senate refused to come into his proposal."

57: 12. *Confounded an aphorism.* This is very boldly borrowed, without acknowledgment, from the account of Blackmore in Johnson's *Lives*. Macaulay is not always fair to Johnson. As to the second charge against Blackmore, if Macaulay found four false quantities on *one* page (he seems to refer to the pronunciation of Latin proper names in an English poem, and not to Latin verses) he would probably consider that to be a sufficient basis for making the statement.

58: 28. *Exsurgit.* Again Macaulay seems to be quoting from memory, for Addison wrote *assurgit*, following Vergil, *Georgics* 3, 355. The translation of the lines is: "Now into mid-ranks strides the lofty leader of the Pygmies, of awful majesty and venerable port, overtopping all the rest with his gigantic bulk, and towering to half an ell."

62: 18. *After his bees.* The figure was suggested by the subject-matter of a portion of the fourth *Georgic*—the hiving and care of bees. It is made more appropriate, too, by the familiar legend, told of many poets and particularly of Pin-

dar, that bees swarmed upon their lips in infancy, portending the sweetness of their future songs.

69: 12. *The accomplished men.* See Boswell's *Johnson.*

69: 23. *Johnson will have it.* In his life of Addison. It is interesting to see how Macaulay delights in setting his opinion against the great Doctor's. In his biographical essay upon him however, he is generous enough, though, as Mr. Morison says, his "appreciation is inadequate."

70: 16. *No poem . . . in dead language.* Macaulay in his various essays, repeats freely his ideas and illustrations. Turn to his essay on Frederic the Great, and in the passage beginning at about the eleventh paragraph, will be found this same discussion, together with the account of Frederic the Great's accomplishments in French, and an allusion to "Newdigate and Seatonian poetry." It is a good example of the working of the psychologic law of association. And any one familiar with the essays can turn to a dozen such examples.

71: 22. *Ne croyez.* "Do not think however, that I mean by this to condemn the Latin verses of one of your illustrious scholars which you have sent me. I find them excellent, worthy indeed of Vida or Sannazaro, though not of Horace and Vergil."

72: 10. *Quid numeris.* "Why, O Muse, dost thou bid me, a Frank, born far this side of the Alps, again to stammer in Latin verse?"

73: 7. *An event.* This union of France and Spain left the other countries of Europe at a great disadvantage, and led to the Grand Alliance against France and Spain, and the long War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714).

74: 29. *More wonder than pleasure.* Not, perhaps, until Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* (1851 53) was Gothic architecture fully appreciated by the English.

75: 17. *Soliloquy.* For the famous soliloquy in Addison's *Tragedy of Cato*, see Act V., Sc. I.

78: 8. *Tory fox hunter.* Addison's *Freeholder*, No. 22.

78: 15. *Tomb of Misenus.* *Aeneid* VI., 233.—*Circe, Aen.* VII., 10.

82: 7. *He became tutor.* Probably incorrect. See Glossary, SOMERSET.

84: 13. *The position of Mr. Canning.* That is, the position of a moderate Tory, favoring the measures and reforms advocated by the Whigs.

87: 12. *Famous similitude.* Containing the famous line, "Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm."

89: 2. *Life-guardsman.* Members of the Life Guards must be six feet tall. Shaw must have been noted for exceptional stature.

93: 19. *Spectre huntsman.* Macaulay may be thinking of Byron's verse, "The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line." (*Don Juan*, iii., 106). "Ravenna's immemorial wood," says Byron, "Boccaccio's lore and Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me." Addison should have known the story from Boccaccio's tale. Dryden's versification of it, *Theodore and Honoria*, was only published in 1700, while Addison was abroad, and it is not likely he had read it before visiting Ravenna, though he might well have read it before writing up his travels. However, Macaulay fails to consider that not all memories respond to suggestions so readily as his own. At one place in his journal, for instance, he tells how he visited Louis the Fourteenth's bedroom, and—"I thought of all St. Simon's anecdotes about that room and bed."

93: 25. *Greatest lyric poet.* This is extravagant praise

97: 4. *The Censorship of the Press.* This practically ceased in 1679, when the statute for the regulation of printing which was passed just after the Restoration, expired.

98: 12. *In Grub street.* Does this mean that Walpole and Pulteney lived in Grub street?

99: 27. *Popularity . . . timidity.* One of Macaulay's paradoxes.

101: 4. *He had one habit.* "He [Macaulay] too frequently resorts to vulgar gaudiness. For example, there is in one place a certain description of an alleged practice of Addison's. Swift had said of Esther Johnson that 'whether from easiness in general, or from her indifference to persons, or from her despair of mending them, or from the same practice which she most liked in Mr. Addison, I cannot determine; but when she saw any of the company very warm in a wrong opinion, she was more inclined to confirm

them in it than to oppose them. It prevented noise, she said, and saved time.' Let us behold what a picture Macaulay draws on the strength of this passage. 'If his first attempts to set a presuming dunce right were ill-received,' Macaulay says of Addison, 'he changed his tone, "assented with civil leer," and lured the flattered coxcomb deeper and deeper into absurdity.' To compare this transformation of the simplicity of the original into the grotesque heat and overcharged violence of the copy, is to see the homely maiden of a country village transformed into the painted flaunter of the city."—JOHN MORLEY. Macaulay's quotation "assented with civil leer," is from Pope's well-known line:

"Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer."

101: 12. *Criticisms . . dialogue. Tatler*, 163; *Spectator*, 568.

104: 12. *Steele.* "The character of Steele, with his chivalry and his derelictions, his high ideal and his broken resolves, has been a favorite one with recent biographers, who prefer his rough address to the excessive and meticulous civility of Addison. It is permissible to love them both, and to see in each the complement of the other. It is proved that writers like Macaulay and even Thackeray have overcharged the picture of Steele's delinquencies, and have exaggerated the amount of Addison's patronage of his friend. But nothing can explain away Steele's carelessness in money matters or his inconsistency in questions of moral detail. He was very quick, warm-hearted and impulsive, while Addison had the advantage of a cold and phlegmatic constitution. Against the many eulogists of the younger man we may place Leigh Hunt's sentence: 'I prefer open-hearted Steele with all his faults to Addison with all his essays.' "—GOSSE: *History of Eighteenth Century Literature* (1889). See also Aitken's *Life of Steele*, II., 345 and elsewhere.

105: 14. *Provoked Addison.* Landor's "Imaginary Conversation between Steele and Addison" will be interesting reading in this connection.

106: 10. *The real history.* See Introduction, **12.**

111: 23. *By mere accident.* As a matter of fact, critics are pretty well agreed that Steele led the way everywhere, though in certain respects Addison often outshone him. In the words of Mr. Aitken, Steele's biographer, "the world owes Addison to Steele."

112: 3. *Half German jargon.* Carlyle had for some years, like Coleridge before him, been acting as a medium between German philosophy and literature and English. Of course Macaulay is ridiculing Carlyle's uncouth style. Landor, another stickler for pure English, said upon the appearance of Carlyle's *Frederick* that he was convinced he (Landor) wrote two dead languages—Latin and English.

116: 18. *Revenge . . wreaked.* Who Bettesworth and De Pompignan were is not important. Can it be determined from the text who "wreaked revenge" upon them?

120: 1. *White staff.* Official badge of the Lord High Treasurer.

120: 15. *We calmly review.* Calmly, perhaps, but not impartially. Macaulay's Whig prejudices are very apparent.

121: 25. *Lost his fortune.* It is very probable, however, that Addison was still what might be called "independently rich."

127: 19. *The following papers.* Nos. 26, 329, 69, 317, 159, 343, 517.

128: 16. *The stamp tax.* A Tory measure of 1712 virtually aimed at the freedom of the press.

130: 4. *Easy solution.* Macaulay's essays are full of these easy solutions. They are usually mere guesses, but it must be admitted that they are usually sensible ones.

131: 11. *From the city.* That is, from the mercantile portion of the city—the original city of London.

133: 30. *The French model.* This refers to dramas of the so-called Classical school, which adhered closely to certain conventional rules—the three "unities," for instance, of time, place, and action. The Shaksperean drama is constructed with far greater freedom.

135: 1. *But among.* Why is this long paragraph allowed to stand as a unit, when it could easily be subdivided? And why are some short paragraphs (the ninth preceding, for

example) allowed to stand when they could easily be combined with the others?

135: 28. *Malice.* Toward whom?

141: 27. *The Swift of 1708.* 1708 was the date of one of Swift's best poems, *Baucis and Philemon*, and of the attack upon astrology in the pamphlet against Partridge, the almanac-maker, which Macaulay has already mentioned. In 1738, the year of his last published writing (long after the death of Addison, be it noted), he was an old man on the verge of insanity.

142: 27. *Iliad.* VI., 226. Diomedes speaks to Glaucus: "So let us shun each other's spears, even among the throng; Trojans are there in multitudes and famous allies for me to slay, whoe'er it be that God vouchsafeth me, and my feet overtake; and for thee are there Achaians in multitude, to slay whome'er thou canst."—LEAF'S translation.

152: 17. *All stiletto and mask.* For Macaulay's portrait of Pope, as of Steele, many allowances must be made.

153: 26. *Cannot . . . certainty.* See Courthope's *Addison*, chapter vii.

154: 16. *Energetic lines.* The "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" (Prologue to the Satires), lines 193-214.

156: 22. *Holland House.* Macaulay has celebrated this mansion of social fame in one of his most ambitious periods —the concluding paragraph of the essay on Lord Holland, a strange compound of artificiality of form and undeniable sincerity of feeling.

157: 19. *Consolatory verses.* Not, of course, because he was to visit Ireland for the last time, but because he had to visit Ireland at all.

164: 11. *Little Dicky was the nickname.* In the article as originally printed in the *Edinburgh Review* this sentence stands: "Little Dicky was evidently the nickname of some comic actor who played the usurer Gomez," etc. Macaulay having discovered later that his guess was entirely right, inserted the name of the actor in the revised essay. But it may be noticed that, in the face of this positive information, his preceding argument and "confident affirmation," which he allowed to remain as writtten, now fall a little flat.

167: 10. *Shepherd, whose crook.* It is a little hard to

forgive Macaulay for yielding so often to the temptation to paraphrase the most beautiful and most exalted passages in literature. The echoes from *Comus* in his essay on Milton will be remembered. And in his essay on Boswell's *Life of Johnson* he has ventured thus to lay hands on one of the sublimest utterances in Dante—Cacciaguida's prophecy of Dante's banishment.

> "Thou shalt have proof how savoreth of salt
> The bread of others, and how hard a road
> The going down and up another's stairs."

To have such pure poetry as this, which remains poetry still in Longfellow's perfect translation, turned into mere rhetoric, into "that bread which is the bitterest of all food, those stairs which are the most toilsome of all paths," jars cruelly upon the sensibilities of all to whom the original has become familiar and sacred.

168: 24. *We ought to add.* Here the journalist and reviewer most inopportunely intrudes upon the eulogist. As to the eulogy itself, the catalogue of dignitaries in the preceding sentence has no such impressiveness for the democratic reader as it may have had for English readers of fifty years ago. In fact it is a little ridiculous, and throws a curious light either on Macaulay's estimate of his readers, or, what is equally probable, upon the limitations of his own nature. To see that nature at its best we must turn back to the revelation of a worthier feeling in the touching description of Addison's dedication of his works to his friend Craggs.

THE LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON

Late in life, when he was busy with his History, and long after he had given up writing for the *Edinburgh Review*, Macaulay, purely out of friendship for the publisher of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, contributed to that work five biographical articles—on Atterbury, Bunyan, Goldsmith, Johnson, and Pitt. The present essay, written in 1856, and still included in the Encyclopædia, is therefore probably the next to the last essay that he wrote. Twenty-five years

before, he had contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* an article on Croker's edition of Boswell's *Life of Dr. Johnson*. One-half of that article covered much the same ground as the later essay; the other half, naturally, was devoted to Boswell and to a severe criticism of the manner in which Boswell's book had been edited by John Wilson Croker, a political and personal enemy of Macaulay. The later essay, reprinted in our text, is much superior in every way—in brevity, unity, and tolerance of tone, failing perhaps only as Macaulay was temperamentally bound to fail, in discerning the moral depth of the great nature he tried to sound. The best collateral reading upon Johnson, apart from Boswell's monumental and indispensable work, is Carlyle's well-known essay, doubtless largely inspired by Macaulay's early and unsatisfactory treatment of the subject.

Page 171: line 9. *Royal touch.* Johnson is said to have been the last person touched in England for this malady—the "King's Evil." The father's parental concern must have proved stronger than his politics, for Jacobites professed to believe that the divine power did not descend to William and Anne. For further particulars about this interesting superstition, see Macaulay's *History of England*, chap. xiv. Cp. also *Macbeth*, iv. 3, 140 ff.

172: 18. *Restorers of learning.* These were the scholars and writers of the Renaissance, the period of the revival of learning in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, just succeeding the "dark ages." Among the best known are Petrarch and Boccaccio, both of whom wrote in Latin as well as Italian.

180: 13. *Dining on tripe.* The description is scarcely exaggerated, but the humor is in questionable taste, and this, too, more from Macaulay's blunt way of putting things than from any offensiveness inherent in the subject.

182: 13. *Knocked down.* "There is nothing to tell, dearest lady, but that he was insolent and I beat him, and that he was a blockhead and told of it, which I should never have done."—Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Johnson*.

182: 25. *It was not then safe.* There was nothing like a general censorship of the English press after 1679, but it was

long understood that the right of free publication did not extend to political news.

183: 30. *The prejudices.* Macaulay's strong Whig bias has evidently lent zest to the description that follows. If Carlyle's description of Johnson be read, it is perhaps well to remember Carlyle's conservative tendencies.

184: 4. *Laud*, etc. The events of the time of Charles I., here alluded to, may be found discussed in Macaulay's essay on Hampden.

193: 7. *A change in the last syllable.* That is to say, *Irene* differed from the other poem only in being unrhymed.

193: 11. *Benefit nights.* Special performances, the proceeds of which were given to the author.

193: 19. *Tatler. Spectator.* An account of these papers is given in the essay on Addison in this volume. See also, in this series, Mr. H. V. Abbott's Introduction to the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, pages 36 and ff.

195: 21. *Sir Roger*, etc. See Mr. Abbott's edition, as above. In *Squire Bluster*, *Mrs. Busy*, etc., the reference is, of course, to characters and sketches in *The Rambler*.

196: 20. *Monthly Review.* There is no evidence that Johnson either feared or respected the judgment of this Review, as Macaulay's words would half imply. It was a Radical organ, and he sometimes spoke of it with contempt. The *Critical Review*, mentioned later, was a Tory paper.

197: 26. *In a letter.* Even Macaulay's high praise seems scarcely adequate to the language of this famous letter, in which scorn is tempered with dignity and justified by a deep-seated sense of wrong. It runs thus:

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Chesterfield.

February 7, 1755.

My Lord:—I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of *The World*, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur*

de la terre;—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the Public should consider me as owing that to a Patron which Provideuce has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most humble,
Most obedient servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

The passage in the Preface of the Dictionary runs thus:

"In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceeded the faults of that which it condemns; yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in

sorrow. It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed. If the lexicons of ancient tongues, now immutably fixed, and comprised in a few volumes, be yet, after the toil of successive ages, inadequate and delusive; if the aggregated knowledge, and co-operating diligence of the Italian academicians, did not secure them from the censure of Beni; if the embodied critics of France, when fifty years had been spent upon their work, were obliged to change its economy, and give their second edition another form, I may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which, if I could obtain, in this gloom of solitude, what could it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds: I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquility, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise."

198: 24. *Scarcely a Teutonic language.* A humorous statement of the common charge, often exaggerated, that Johnson was fond of words of Latin origin.

202: 17. *Hector*, etc. See *Troilus and Cressida*, II. ii.; *Winter's Tale*, II. i. and V. ii.

203: 5. *The Lord Privy Seal.* See Dictionaries under *cabinet*. "You know, sir, Lord Gower forsook the old Jacobite interest. When I came to the word *Renegado*, after telling that it meant 'one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter,' I added, *Sometimes we say a* GOWER. Thus it went to the press; but the printer had more wit than I, and struck it out."—Boswell's *Johnson*.

203: 17. *Oxford*, etc. Recall the thirteenth paragraph of this essay. Cavendish and Bentinck, of course, were Whigs; Somerset and Wyndham Tories. It may be quite accidental, but it is interesting to note that Macaulay describes the loyalty of the latter men in half contemptuous language. Rhetorically considered, the passage is a good example of Macaulay's swift narrative, with explanatory connectives omitted. See Introduction, **15**.

205: 6. *A ghost.* See the account of this in Boswell's *Johnson*, 1763; also, *Harper's Magazine*, August, 1893. Macaulay's account should not be allowed to pass without comparison with Carlyle's in the latter's essay on Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.

209: 19. *Trunk-maker*, etc. Books and papers otherwise unsalable were turned over to trunk-makers and cooks, who employed the paper in lining trunks and pans.

211: 17. *Prejudiced against Boswell's country.* Compare the famous definition in his Dictionary: "Oats.—A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people."

219: 14. *Maxime*, etc. "I very much desire, if you are willing, to try a bout with you."

219: 29. *Written down.* This is an ellipsis of the famous exclamation of Dogberry, "O that he were here to write me down an ass!"—*Much Ado About Nothing*, II. ii.

221: 18. *As Burke would have failed.* See Introduction, **8**.

226: 1. *Music-master from Brescia.* The name of this Italian was Piozzi. Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Johnson* make an interesting supplement to Boswell's *Life*.

226: 19. *A solemn . . . prayer.*

"Almighty God, Father of all mercy, help me by Thy grace, that I may, with humble and sincere thankfulness, remember the comforts and conveniences which I have enjoyed at this place; and that I may resign them with holy submission, equally trusting in Thy protection when Thou givest, and when Thou takest away. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me.

"To Thy fatherly protection, O Lord, I commend this family. Bless, guide, and defend them, that they may so pass through this world, as finally to enjoy in Thy presence everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Boswell has recorded some half a dozen of Johnson's prayers.

226: 25. *Few and evil.* Cp. *Genesis*, xlvii.9.

227: 9. *Two pictures.* See *Hamlet*, III. iv. 53.

GLOSSARY.

For the principle followed in compiling this Glossary, and on the use of reference books generally, see Preface.

Act. At Oxford, the occasion of the conferring of degrees, at which formerly miracle and mystery plays were enacted. After 1669 the Act was performed in the Sheldonian Theatre, and London companies frequently went down to give performances. 133:15.

Act of Settlement. The agreement by which the Hanoverians and not the Stuarts (whom Louis XIV. favored) were to succeed Queen Anne. 85:6.

Aes'chylus, Eurip'ides, Soph'ocles. The three great tragic poets of Greece. 207:7.

Ag'barus or Ab'garus. Ruler of Edessa in Mesopotamia. Eusebius supposed him to have been the author of a letter written to Christ, found in the church at Edessa. The letter is believed by Gibbon and others to be spurious. 56:22.

Alamode beefshops. "Alamode beef" is a stew made of beef scraps. 181:24.

Almon and Stockdale. Eighteenth century London publishers and booksellers. The former was also a political pamphleteer and friend of Wilkes. 220:17.

Athalie'. A tragedy by the French dramatist Racine. 134:1.

Augustan. The Roman literature of the age of Augustus was marked by polish and refinement. The age of Queen Anne in English literature is often called the Augustan age. 172:12.

Balisar'da. In Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, the enchanted sword of Orlando (cp. Arthur's Excalibur), which finally falls into the hands of Rogero. In Rogero's fight with Bradamante, it is exchanged for another sword (xlv. 68). 45:18.

Beggar's Opera, The. By John Gay. It was produced in London in 1728 and ran for sixty-three nights, practically driving from the stage Italian opera, which it satirized. 180:11.

Ben. That is, "rare Ben" Jonson, the second great dramatist of the Elizabethan age. 206:28.

Bena'cus. The largest lake of Northern Italy and noted for storms. It is now called Garda. Vergil (*Georgics* 2, 160) tells of "Benacus, swelling with billows and boisterous turmoil, like a sea." 74:30.

Bentley, Richard. A noted English classical scholar. His "Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris" (1697, 1699), which Porson, another noted scholar, called "the immortal dissertation," was written to prove the spuriousness of those epistles. 57:22.

Bill of Rights, or Declaration of Rights. See any English History

Biographia Britannica. Published 1747-66. Long a standard work: superseded of course now, especially by the *Dictionary of National Biography*. 49:7.

Blenheim. In Bavaria. The scene of the great defeat of the French (1704) by the allies under Marlborough and Prince Eugene. 84:29.

Blues, Greens. In Roman chariot races the drivers were divided into four companies, distinguished by four colors—green, red, blue, and white—corresponding to the four seasons of the year. Macaulay has in mind the later factions at Constantinople, for which see Gibbon. 183:15.

Book of Gold. The name given to the list of Genoese nobles and citizens of property which was made at the time Andrea Doria delivered Genoa from French domination (1528). 74:22.

Boyle, Charles. He attempted, with the help of others, to defend the genuineness of the "Epistles of Phalaris" against the famous scholar Bentley. Swift's *Battle of the Books* is founded on the incident. See Macaulay's sketch of Atterbury in the *Ency. Brit.* 57:5.

Bradaman'te. In Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* a woman of great prowess, finally overcome by Rogero, whom she marries. 45:16.

Brunel, Sir Marc Isambard. A civil engineer who in 1806 completed machinery for making ships' blocks. 60:26.

Buck, Macaroni. Equivalent to the later *blood*, *fop*, *dandy*. The second word is derived from The Macaroni Club, a set of young men who had traveled in Italy and introduced into England the Italian dish, macaroni. 214:14.

Burney, Frances. A novelist, author of *Evelina*, etc. See Macaulay's essay upon her, entitled *Madame D'Arblay*. 228:22.

Button's. A London coffee-house, probably established by an old servant of Addison's. 48:15.

Captain General. See MARLBOROUGH. 95:21.

Capulets, Montagues. Two hostile families of northern Italy, celebrated through Shakspere's *Romeo and Juliet*. 183:15.

Catharine of Braganza. The Infanta of Portugal. Married Charles II. of England in 1662. 49:23.

Cat'inat, Nicholas. Commander of the French army in Northern Italy in the War of the Spanish Succession. 79:30.

Charter House (a corruption of *Chartreuse*). Originally a Carthusian monastery in London; later an endowed hospital and school for boys. Pictured by Thackeray, in *The Newcomes*, under the name of Grey Friars. 50:20.

Child's. A coffee-house, frequented by churchmen. 124:17.

Churchill, Charles. An English poet and satirist of the eighteenth century. 205:15.

Cibber, Colley. This inferior playwright, actor, and adapter of Shakspere's plays, was appointed poet laureate in 1730. He was satirized by Pope in the *Dunciad*, which Savage assisted Pope in publishing. 222:15.

Cinna. A tragedy by the French dramatist Corneille. 134:2.

Clerkenwell. A district of northern London which formerly bore an evil reputation. 205:9.

Cock Lane Ghost. See Boswell's *Johnson*, June 25, 1763. 56:18.

Collier, Jeremy. An English clergyman. He attacked the contemporary theatre in his *Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, 1698. 117:3.

Conduct of the Allies. A famous Tory pamphlet written by Swift, 1711. 97:13.

Congreve, 46:29; **Wycherley,** 117:5; **Etherege,** 117:4; **Vanbrugh,** 117:15. For the Restoration drama and dramatists, see Macaulay's essay on Leigh Hunt's edition of the dramatists: also his History, Chapters II and III.

Corporation. In English politics, a body of men governing a town and selecting its member of Parliament. 122:4.

demy', or demi. At Magdalen College, Oxford, a student upon a scholarship, who will succeed to the next vacant fellowship. 52:19.

Dodington, George Bubb. An English politician with the reputation of a place-hunter. He patronized Young and other men of letters. 194:10.

Drury Lane Theatre. This famous London theatre, opened in 1663, was reopened in 1674 with an address by Dryden. 191:30.

Duenna, The. One of Sheridan's comedies. 164:5.

Eliz'abethan age. In literature, the term commonly includes the reigns of both Elizabeth and James I. 47:4.

Ephesian Matron. The legend runs, according to Petronius, that a woman of Ephesus, while mourning over the body of her husband in the burial-vault, was smitten with love for a soldier who was standing guard, and straightway married him. See Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Dying*, V. viii. 227:9.

Erasmus. A famous Dutch theological scholar. His works, after the fashion of the time (1500), were written in Latin. 71:10.

Etherege. See CONGREVE. 117:4.

Eton. Eton College, twenty-one miles southwest of London, is one of England's great public schools. The classes in these schools are known as "forms," and the sixth form is usually the highest. 172:16.

Eugene, Prince. The Austrian general in the War of the Spanish Succession. 125:22.

Fausti'na. The profligate wife of the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius. 92:19.

Fracasto'rius. The Latin form of Fracastorio. An Italian physician of the 16th century, who wrote Latin poems on pathological subjects. 71:10.

Frances'ca da Rim'ini. Made immortal in the most famous Canto (*Inf.* v.) of Dante's *Divine Comedy* 93:21.

Frederic, Louis. Eldest son of George II. He died at Leicester House, then the residence of the Prince of Wales, in 1751. 194:15.

Freeholder. A political paper published by Addison, December, 1715, to June, 1716. 78:8.

Garrets. Like *attics*, sometimes used in the plural for the rooms in the attic story. 214:22.

Gazetteer. The editor of the state newspaper, the *Gazette*, established by Charles II. 109:15.

Ger'ano-Pygmæoma'chia, or **Pygmæo-Geranomachia.** (*Battle of the Pygmies and Cranes*). A Latin poem by Addison, 72:15.

Godolphin, Earl of. Lord High Treasurer during the early part of Anne's reign. As a financier, he raised the funds to support Marlborough in his prosecution of the war on the continent. 83:8.

Goodman's Fields. In the neighborhood of the Tower of London. 191:27.

Grand Alliance. The alliance formed in 1701 between the Holy Roman Empire England, and the Netherlands against France and Spain. 80:5.

Grecian, The. A London coffee-house of the eighteenth century. The Learned Club met there 109:27.

Grub Street, London. Now Milton street; formerly noted as the abode of small authors. 188:28.

Guardian. A periodical published by Steele and Addison, 1713. 73:3.

Gunning, Maria and Elizabeth, Two sisters who went to London in 1751 and became celebrated for their beauty. When Maria walked in Hyde Park she attracted such crowds that the king had to furnish her with a body-guard. 196:16.

Gwynn, Nell. An English actress, and mistress of Charles II. 156:24.

Halifax. See MONTAGUE. 80:20.

Hampton Court. A royal palace on the Thames. 47:3.

Harleian Library. A famous collection of books and manuscripts, now in the British Museum. When it was in Osborne's possession, Johnson prepared an elaborate description of it. 182:14.

Harley, Edward. An English Tory statesman and High Churchman. Before 1690 he had been a Whig. 95:16.

Hartley, David. An English philosopher and psychologist, a friend of Young. 194:9.

Holland House. See Note on. 156:22.

Hough, John. Bishop of Worcester. Elected president of Magdalen College, 1687. 52:6.

Inns of Court. The name of four legal societies of London, and of the premises which they occupy—the Inner Temple, the Middle Temple Lincoln's Inn, and Gray's Inn. 131:8.

Ireland, William Henry. A writer of plays which he pretended to have discovered, and attributed to Shakspere. *Vortigern and Rowena* was played at Drury Lane, 1796 and its complete failure resulted in exposure. 56:19.

Jack Pudding. A clown in English folk-lore. 114:13.

Jenyns, Soame. An English miscellaneous writer of the eighteenth century, whose style was better than his matter. 199:21.

Johnson's Club. Otherwise known as The Literary Club. It is still in existence. 210:18.

Jonathan's and Garraway's. London coffee-houses frequented by merchants and stock-jobbers. The promoters of the South Sea Bubble met at Garraway's. 131:12.

Junius, Franziskus. A German student of the Teutonic languages and compiler of an etymological dictionary. He died in England in 1677. 198:26.

Juvenal. A Roman satirist. Johnson's *London* is modelled after his *Third Satire*. 185:21.

Kit-Cat Club. A club of Whig politicians and wits. 67:5.

Lady Mary. See MONTAGU.

Languish, Lydia. A romantic character in Sheridan's comedy, *The Rivals*. 200:16.

Lapu'tan flapper. See *Gulliver's Travels*, iii. 2. 46:16.

Lennox and Sheridan, Mesdames. Literary women and friends of Dr. Johnson. The latter was the mother of the dramatist, Sheridan. 202:2.

Lilliput. See *Gulliver's Travels* for the meaning of the terms in this passage. 182:30.

Machi'næ Gesticulan'tes. (*Puppet Show*). A Latin poem by Addison. 72:14.

Macpherson, James. A Scotch poet. His *Fingal, an Epic Poem in Six Books*, professing to be a translation of certain Gaelic poems in which Fingal is the hero and Ossian the bard, is now generally regarded as in the main a forgery. 218:8

Macrobius. A Roman grammarian of the fifth century. 173:15.

Malone, Edmund. A noted Shaksperean critic; died 1812. He edited various editions of Boswell's *Johnson*. 224:8.

Manchester, Earl of. Ambassador to France just before the War of the Spanish Succession. 66:29.

Mansfield, Lord. William Murray, chief-justice of the king's bench, 1756-1788. 217:22.

Marlborough, Duke of (John Churchill). One of the most famous of England's great commanders. He was the leading spirit of the Grand Alliance. 83:8.

Marli. Marly-le-Roy, a village ten miles from Paris, noted for a chateau of Louis XIV. 119:20.

Meister, Wilhelm. The hero of Goethe's novel, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*. 206:5.

Mitre, The. A noted London tavern, near Fleet street, a favorite resort of Dr. Johnson. 215:23.

Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley. A keen observer and witty writer, who moved in the higher literary and court circles under the first Georges. Her *Letters* were published in 1763. 196:17.

Mourad Bey. Commander of the Mamelukes at their defeat by Napoleon in the Battle of the Pyramids. 89:7.

New'digate prize. An annual prize for English verse, founded at Oxford by Sir Roger Newdigate. 59:24.

Newgate. A famous old London prison. 187:22.

Newmarket Heath, in Cambridgeshire. Annual horse-races have been held there since the time of James I. 85:14.

October Club. A club of extreme Tories, named for its celebrated October ale. 131:27.

Orrery. John Boyle, fifth Earl of Orrery, who published *Remarks on the Life of Swift*. 222:16.

Pembroke. One of the latest founded of the nineteen colleges which in Johnson's time comprised the University of Oxford. Christ Church was another, older and more aristocratic. Both still exist. 173:7.

peripeti'a. A Greek technical term, signifying a sudden change or reverse of fortune, on which the plot of a tragedy turns; the denouement. 136:20.

Politian. A Florentine poet and scholar of the Renaissance period 177:19.

Pomposo (Italian). "Pompous." 205:19.

Prior, Matthew. An English poet. After the death of Anne and the rise of the Whig ministry, he was imprisoned under suspicion of high treason (1715-17). 46:30.

Psalmanazar, George. A French impostor who pretended to be a native of Japan converted to Christianity. He invented for himself a "native" language, calling it "Formosan." 187:11.

Queensberrys and Lepels. Families of the aristocracy. 177:30.

Ravenna, Wood of. The *Pineta* or pine forest on the shore near Ravenna. See Dante, *Purg.* xxviii, 20. 93:18.

Rich, Henry. Earl of Holland, from whom Holland House took its name. 160:18.

Richardson, Samuel. Author of the famous eighteenth century novels, *Pamela*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*. 199:6.

Romano, Giulio. An Italian painter, and pupil of Raphael. 101:18.

Royal Academy, The. An academy of fine arts, particularly painting, founded 1768. Johnson was appointed "Professor of Ancient Literature." 107:23.

Sacheverell, Henry. An English High Church clergyman and violent Tory. He was impeached for preaching against the Whig ministry. The trial grew into a party struggle, which resulted in the overthrow of the Whigs in 1710. 95:27.

Saint James's Square. A center of the London aristocracy. A blue ribbon is the badge of the Order of the Garter, the highest order of knighthood in Great Britain. 187:20.

St. James's Coffee-House. The resort of politicians. 124:18.

Santa Croce, Church of. In Florence. Michelangelo, Galileo, and others are buried there. 93:18.

Satirist . . . Age. Sensational journals of Macaulay's time. 152:8.

Saul. A tragedy by the Italian poet Alfieri. 134:1.

Savoy, Duke of. See VICTOR AMADEUS. 80:1.

Seatonian prize. An annual prize for sacred poetry, founded at Cambridge by the will (1741) of Thos. Seaton, hymn writer. 59:24.

Sejanus. A Roman courtier, and favorite of Tiberius. 191:5.

Silius Italicus. A Roman writer of a dull heroic poem in seventeen books. 55:12.

Skinner, Stephen An English lexicographer whose *Etymological Dictionary* was published in 1671. 198:26.

Smalridge, George, Bishop of Bristol in the time of Queen Anne. Dr. Johnson praised his sermons for their "style." 118:9.

Somerset. Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset. Called "the Proud" — hardly distinguished otherwise. He refused to employ Addison as tutor to his son, possibly because future patronage would be expected of him. 65:11.

Southwark (suth'ark). A London borough, south of the Thames. 213:21.

Spectator. A paper published daily by Steele, Addison and others. Mar., 1711, to Dec., 1712; continued by Addison in 1714. 73:3.

Spence, Joseph (1699-1768). An English critic who left a volume of criticism and anecdotes. 68:2

Sponging-house. A house to which debtors were temporarily taken before being thrown into prison for debt. 199:5.

Squire Western. A character in Fielding's *Tom Jones.* 145:4.

Streatham Common. A district of London, near the present British Museum. 113:22.

Surface, Joseph. A hypocrite in Sheridan's *School for Scandal.* 155:15.

Tangier', or Tangiers. A seaport of Morocco. 49:22.

Tatler. A periodical published by Steele and Addison, 1709-11. 101:12.

Teazle, Sir Peter. A character in Sheridan's *School for Scandal.* 155:15.

Tempest, Tom. See Johnson's *Idler,* No. 10. 184:2.

Temple, Sir William. An English statesman and author. Macaulay has an essay upon him. 111:27.

Theobald's. A country seat in Hertfordshire. The residence of Lord Burleigh Used as a palace by James I. 47:1.

Thundering Legion. A legion of Christian soldiers under Marcus Aurelius, whose prayers for rain, according to legend, were answered by a thunder storm which destroyed their enemies. Addison speaks of the event in his essay "Of the Christian Religion," vii. 3. 56:20.

Tooke, Horne. The name assumed by John Horne in 1782. He was a philologist and a politician—an extreme Liberal, often in controversy. 198:4.

Town Talk. A paper established by Steele, Dec. 17, 1715. But nine numbers were issued. 146:3.

Triad. A rhetorical term signifying a group of three balanced words or phrases. (The next following sentence in Macaulay's essay affords an example). 108:16.

Vanbrugh'. See CONGREVE. 117:15.

Victor Amade'us II., Duke of Savoy. He abandoned Louis and joined the alliance in 1703. 92:11.

Walpole, Horace (1717-97). The author of *The Castle of Otranto* and many memoirs and letters. 112:1.

Warburton, William. Bishop of Gloucester. A critic of Johnson's time, and editor of Shakspere's plays. 189:14.

Whitfield, George (commonly spelled *Whitefield*). A celebrated open-air preacher, one of the founders of Methodism. 211:12.

Wild of Sussex. Commonly called "Weald." The Weald is a name given to a district comprising portions of the counties of Kent and Sussex in southeastern England. It is not certain whether the word is to be traced to the Anglo-Saxon *weald,* "forest," modern "wold," or whether it is an irregular form of *wild.* 49:18.

Wilkes, John. An English demagogue. See Macaulay's essay on *The Earl of Chatham.* 211:10.

Will's. A well-known London coffee-house in the time of Dryden and Addison, known also as "The Wits' Coffee-House." The resort of poets and wits. 109:27.

Windham, William. Secretary for War under Pitt. He was a pall-bearer at Johnson's funeral 228:19.

Wych'erley. See CONGREVE. 117:5

Young, Edward. Author of the meditative blank verse poem, *Night Thoughts.* 194:5.

APPENDIX

(Adapted, and enlarged, from the *Manual for the Study of English Classics,* by George L. Marsh)

HELPS TO STUDY

Macaulay

What is the date of Macaulay's first contribution to the *Edinburgh Review?* How old was he at this time? Who was the editor of this magazine? How long did Macaulay continue to contribute to it (p. 15)?

Into what divisions do the writings of Macaulay fall (p. 19)? Name six of Macaulay's best essays. What is their literary significance (p. 38)?

Perry Picture 93 is a portrait of Macaulay.

His Style

What change did Macaulay bring about in the prose style of the first quarter of the nineteenth century (p. 16)? What has been the influence of his style on modern journalism (p. 39)?

Are the leading traits of Macaulay's character—brusqueness, precision without fastidiousness, and self-confidence—illustrated in his style?

His style is noted for clearness, simplicity, force, balanced and antithetical structure, use of illustration, and use of exaggerations; collect illustrations of all these qualities from particular passages of each essay.

Note Macaulay's use of words. Are they long, short, common, unusual, scientific, newly-coined, foreign, con-

crete, general, pictorial, suggestive, of Latin or Saxon origin? What would you say of his use of words on page 81?

Examine any ten consecutive pages for his use of words, and tabulate your conclusions. What is the average length of his words?

Note his sentence length and structure. Are any of his sentences too short for unity? Any too long for unity? Are they prevailingly loose or periodic? Note examples of loose sentences.

Are his sentences effective, artistic, overworked?

Examine any fifteen consecutive pages and write out your conclusions as to the average number of words in each sentence.

How many sentences have fewer than fifteen words? How many more than thirty?

How many violate the normal order?

How does Macaulay obtain emphasis?

Note the short sentences on page 85. Do you think it possible to connect these short sentences?

On any two pages you may choose, how many complex sentences are there? How many compound? Is it possible to convert any of his complex sentences into compound ones?

How does Macaulay connect paragraphs?

Illustrate his unity of paragraph structure from any six pages you choose.

What is the topic sentence of the second paragraph on page 57?

Selecting ten paragraphs, pick out and write down in your own words the topic sentence of each paragraph. Is it at the beginning, at the end, or in the middle of the paragraph? What relations do the other sentences bear to it?

Does Macaulay use an abundance of figures of speech? Write out as many as you can find.

What are the sources of his illustrations? Do they seem forced (p. 36)?

Does he presume the reader to be well informed?

Does it seem true that he read everything and was incapable of forgetting anything (p. 27)?

Notice his use of rhetorical questions. What effect do they have?

Does he ever sacrifice truth to brilliancy?

Collect glaring instances of hyperbole.

Essay on Addison

In relation to Addison, see also the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, Lake Classic edition.

Compare the opening with that of the *Essay on Milton*. What is the purpose here?

What high praise does Macaulay give Addison (p. 48)? Note and justify these points as you read the essay.

Notice the general divisions of the essay (pp. 45-49; 50-62; 63-82; 83-108; 109-139; 140-159; 160-169). Summarize in a few words the main topics treated under each division. Which are the more important divisions? Which seem out of proportion? Is the order in which Macaulay takes them up a good one?

Systematize under appropriate headings what Macaulay says of Addison's life, his character, and his writings.

Is Macaulay fair to Steele's character (pp. 104 ff.)? (Introduction to *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, Lake ed.) Note how Macaulay continues to emphasize the contrast between Addison and Steele (p. 144).

Can you justify the space and detailed treatment given to the Pope episode? See the Lake Classic edition of selections from Pope's translation of the *Iliad*.

Note how skillfully Macaulay reiterates Addison's virtues at the end. Are there any new characteristics of

Addison introduced here? Show where each one not new has been introduced before.

Characterize the conclusion. Compare it with the conclusion of the *Essay on Milton*. Which of these two essays illustrates Macaulay's style to the better advantage? Summarize the chief points of difference in style between the two essays. In which is there a greater proportion of short sentences?

Essay on Johnson

Perry Picture 873B is a portrait of Johnson.

Extracts from Boswell's *Life of Johnson* may be found in Newcomer and Andrews' *Twelve Centuries of English Poetry and Prose* (pp. 363 ff.). See also suggestions on Irving's *Life of Goldsmith* (Lake Classic ed.).

Note any similarity or difference of method in treatment of biography, between this essay and the *Essay on Addison:* the separation of the man from the author; space given to biographical facts and to literary estimate; treatment of ancestry and of influence of heredity (pp. 49, 171); Macaulay's own political sympathies (p. 184 and Notes); digressions. Note the chief points of difference in style between the two essays. Are differences that you find due to the purpose for which this essay was written (p. 238)?

Macaulay states his theory of the life of Johnson in lines 21, 22, page 171. Show how he has this in mind at all times; how the "impediments" are heaped up and brought before us in the strongest terms, and how Johnson's triumph is stated with equal force. For this purpose the facts are given in such detail on pages 171-73. When are they later taken up? For a final estimate compare the last paragraph, particularly the last sentence (p. 229).

Summarize the chief characteristics of Johnson as given by Macaulay, and illustrate them by examples given, as

far as possible. What characteristic is strongly shown in the second paragraph on page 177?

Describe Johnson's early struggles in London. Who were some of his friends at this time? Compare them with those of his later life (p. 209). Note the fine use of contrast in describing Garrick and Johnson (p. 192). What were the relations of Johnson and Pope (p. 186)?

What are the value and interest of Boswell's *Life*?

What is the importance of Johnson's *Dictionary*? (See Professor Lounsbury in Harper's Magazine, Aug. and Sept., 1903.) What are some of its faults (p. 203)? What effective service was rendered to letters by Johnson in his letter to Chesterfield (pp. 197, 198; Notes, p. 240)?

Much is said of Johnson's style. This cannot be accepted entirely on Macaulay's authority, but should be illustrated, as far as possible, by selections from Johnson's works. The statement on page 223, lines 15 ff., should be shown by illustration to be either false or true.

THEME SUBJECTS

1. Macaulay's career (pp. 15-20).
2. Personal merits and defects of Macaulay (pp. 24-42). (Themes illustrating separately the different characteristics developed in the pages just referred to may be assigned.)
3. A study of Macaulay's sentences; of his paragraphs; of his choice of words; of his organization of the whole composition.
4. The *Essay on Addison* as a review.
5. Summaries of the main divisions of the *Essay on Addison*.
6. A sketch of Addison's life (picked out carefully from the essay).
7. Addison as a poet and dramatist (pp. 59, 87-92, 94, 130 ff.).
8. Addison's political career.
9. Addison's relations to Steele. (A defense of Steele may be attempted.)
10. Addison and Pope (pp. 135, 146 ff.).
11. Character sketch of Addison.
12. Differences in method and style, between the *Essay on Johnson* and the *Essay on Addison*.
13. A summary of Johnson's life.
14. Character sketch of Johnson.
15. Johnson's early struggles in London (pp. 179 ff.).
16. The history of Johnson's *Dictionary* (his relations with Chesterfield, etc.; pp. 189, 197, etc.).
17. Johnson and Boswell (pp. 210 ff.).
18. Johnson's literary work (by classes, with brief estimates).
19. Macaulay's influence on modern style (pp. 40, 41) with examples taken from magazine or newspaper articles.

SELECTIONS FOR CLASS READING

1. Introductory estimate of Addison (pp. 47-49).
2. Addison's *Campaign* (pp. 87-92).
3. Characteristics of Addison (pp. 99-103).
4. Addison and Steele (pp. 104-6).
5. Addison's wit and humor (pp. 112-16).
6. The *Spectator* (pp. 124-29).
7. Addison and Pope (pp. 146-56).
8. Addison's death, and a concluding estimate (pp. 166-69).
9. Johnson's birth and boyhood (pp. 170-72).
10. Johnson when he left Oxford (pp. 175, 176).
11. The profession of literature in Johnson's time (pp. 179, 180).
12. Johnson's *Dictionary* (pp. 189, 190, 196-98).
13. Johnson and Garrick (pp. 191-93).
14. *The Rambler* (pp. 194-96).
15. *Rasselas* (pp. 200-202).
16. Johnson as a talker, and his Club (pp. 208-10).
17. Johnson and Boswell (pp. 210-12).
18. Johnson and the Thrales (pp. 212-14).
19. The *Lives of the Poets* (pp. 222-24).
20. Johnson's death (pp. 225-29).

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